

ANARCHISM: A CRITICISM AND HISTORY OF THE ANARCHIST THEORY

Ernst Viktor Zenker



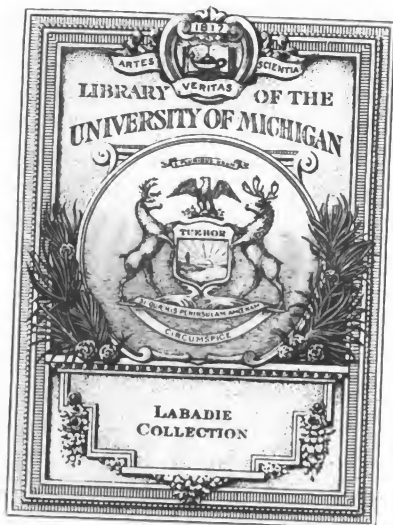
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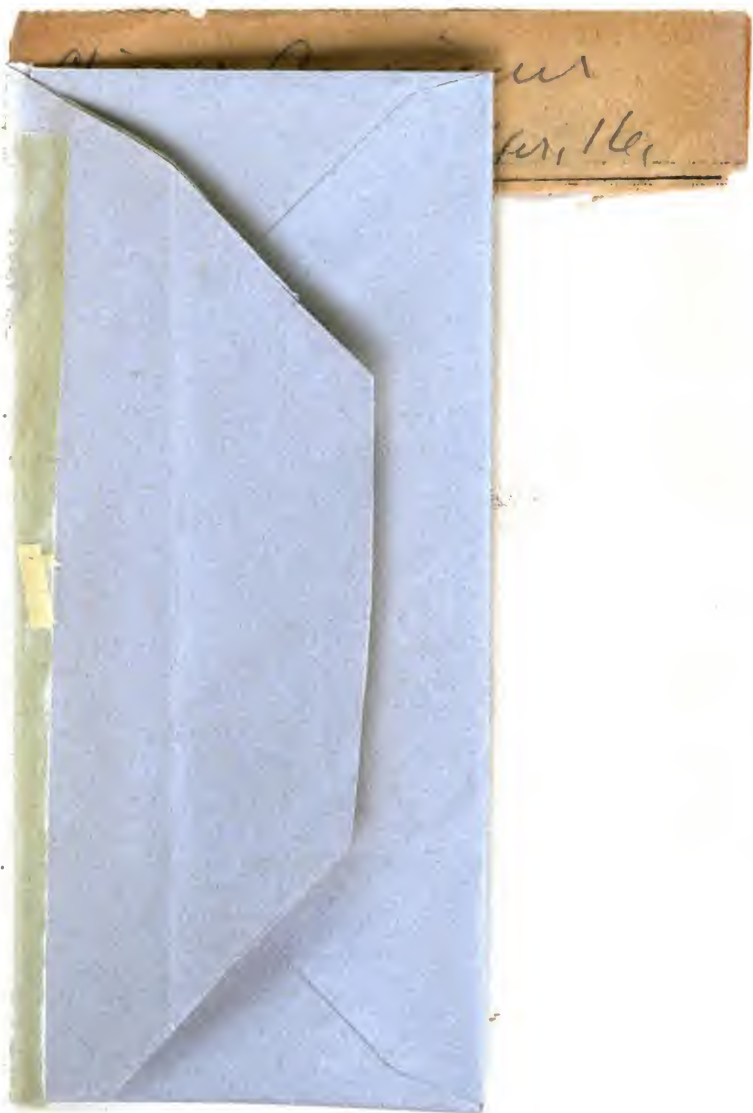
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ANARCHISM

A CRITICISM AND HISTORY
OF THE ANARCHIST
THEORY

BY

E. V. ZENKER

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
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P R E F A C E



ON the day of the bomb outrage in the French Parliament I gave an impromptu discourse upon Anarchism to an intelligent audience anxious to know more about it, touching upon its intellectual ancestry, its doctrines, propaganda, the lines of demarcation that separate it from Socialism and Radicalism, and so forth. The impression which my explanations of it made upon my audience was at the same time flattering and yet painful to me. I felt almost ashamed that I had told these men, who represented the pick of the middle-class political electorate, something entirely new to them in speaking of matters which, considering their reality and the importance of the question, ought to be familiar to every citizen. Having thus had my attention drawn to this *lacuna* in the public mind, I was induced to make a survey of the most diverse circles of the political and Socialist world, both of readers and writers, and the result was the resolve to extend my previous studies of Anarchism (which had not extended

much beyond the earliest theorists), and to develop my lecture into a book. This book I now present to my readers.

The accomplishment of my resolve has been far from easy. What little literature exists upon the subject of Anarchism is almost exclusively hostile to it, which is a great drawback for one who is seeking not the objects of a partisan, but simply and solely the truth. One had constantly to gaze, so to speak, through a forest of prejudices and errors in order to discover the truth like a little spot of blue sky above. In this respect I found it mattered little whether I applied to the press, or to the so-called scientific Socialists, or to fluent pamphleteers.

" In vielen Worten wenig Klarheit,
Ein Fünkchen Witz und keine Wahrheit." ¹

Laveleye, for instance, does not even know of Proudhon; for him Bakunin is the only representative of Anarchism and the most characteristic; Socialism, Nihilism, and Anarchism mingle together in wild confusion in the mind of this social historian. Garin, who wrote a big book, entitled *The Anarchists*, is not acquainted with a single Anarchist author, except some youthful writings of Proudhon's and a few agitationist placards and manifestoes of the modern period. The result of this ignorance is that he identifies Anarchism completely with Collectivism, and carries his ridiculous ignorance so far as to connect the former Austrian minister Schöffle, who

¹ Many words, but little light; a spark of wit, but no truth.

was then the chief adviser of Count Hohenwart, in some way or other with the Anarchists. Professor Enrico Ferri, again, exposes his complete ignorance of the question at issue sufficiently by branding Herbert Spencer as an Anarchist. In fact, the only work that can be called scientifically useful is the short article on "Anarchism" in the *Cyclopædia of Political Science*, from the pen of Professor George Adler. All pamphlets, articles, and essays which have since appeared on the same subject are, conveniently but uncritically, founded upon this short but excellent essay of Adler's. Since the extraordinary danger of Anarchist doctrines is firmly fixed as a dogma in the minds of the vast majority of mankind, it is apparently quite unnecessary to obtain any information about its real character in order to pronounce a decided, and often a decisive, judgment upon it. And so almost all who have hitherto written upon or against Anarchism, with a few very rare exceptions, have probably never read an Anarchist publication, even cursorily, but have contented themselves with certain traditional catchwords.

As a contrast to this, it was necessary, for the purposes of a critical work upon Anarchism, to go right back to its sources and to the writings of those who represented it. But here I found a further difficulty, which could not always be overcome. Where was I to get these writings? Our great public libraries, whose pride it is to possess the most complete collections possible of all the texts of Herodotus or Sophocles, have of course thought

it beneath their dignity to place on their shelves the works of Anarchist doctrinaires, or even to collect the pamphlet literature for or against Anarchism—productions which certainly cannot take a very high rank from the point of view either of literature or of fact. The consequence of this foresight on the part of our librarians is that, to-day, anyone who inquires into the development of the social question in these great libraries devoted to science and public study has nothing to find, and therefore nothing to seek. I have thus been compelled to procure the materials I wanted partly through the kindness of friends and acquaintances, and partly by purchase of books—often at considerable expense,—but always by roundabout means and with great difficulty. And here I should like specially to emphasise the fact that it was the literary representatives of Anarchism themselves who, although I never concealed my hostility to Anarchism, placed their writings at my disposal in the kindest and most liberal manner; and for this I hereby beg to offer them my heartiest thanks, and most of all Professor Elisée Reclus, of Brussels.

But if I thus enter into details of the difficulties which met me in writing the present book, it is not with the object of surrounding myself with the halo of a pioneer. I only wish to lay my hand on a sore which has no doubt troubled other authors also; and, at the same time, to explain to my critics the reason why there are still so many *lacunæ* in this work. I have, for instance, been quite unable to procure any book or essay by

Tucker, or a copy of his journal *Liberty*, although several booksellers did their best to help me, and although I applied personally to Mr. Tucker at Boston. It was all in vain. *Ut aliquid fecisse videatur*, I ordered from Chicago M. J. Schaack's book, *Anarchy and Anarchists, a History of the Red Terror and the Social Revolution in America and Europe: Communism, Socialism, and Nihilism, in Doctrine and in Deed*. After waiting four months, and repeatedly urging things on, I at last received it, and soon perceived that I had merely bought a pretty picture book for my library for my five dollars. The book contains, in spite of its grandiloquent title, its six hundred and ninety-eight large octavo pages, and its "numerous illustrations from authentic photographs and from original drawings," not a single word about the doctrine of Anarchism in general, or American Anarchism in particular. The author, a police official, takes up a standpoint which is certainly quite explicable in one of his position, but which is hardly suitable for a social historian. To him "all Socialists are Anarchists as a first step, although all Anarchists are not precisely Socialists" (see page 22), —which is certainly praiseworthy moderation in a police officer. He calls Ferdinand Lassalle "the father of German Anarchism as it exists to-day" (page 23); on the other hand he has no knowledge of Tucker (of Boston), the most prominent exponent of theoretical Anarchism in America. This, then, was the literature which was at my disposal.

As regards the standpoint which I have taken in this

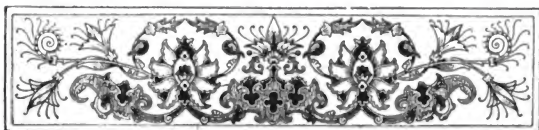
book upon questions of fact, it is strictly the coldly observant and critical attitude of science and no other. I was not concerned to write either for or against Anarchism, but only to tell the great mass of the people that concerns itself with public occurrences for the first time what Anarchism really is, and what it wishes to do, and whether Anarchist views are capable of discussion like other opinions. The condemnation of Anarchism, which becomes necessary in doing this, proceeds exclusively from the exercise of scientific criticism, and has nothing to do with any partisan judgment, be it what it may. It would be a contradiction to adopt a partisan attitude at the very time when one is trying to remind public opinion of a duty which has been forgotten in the heat of party conflict.

But I do not for a moment allow myself to be deluded into thinking that, with all my endeavours to be just to all, I have succeeded in doing justice to all. Elisée Reclus wrote to me, when I informed him of my intention to write the present book, and of my opinion of Anarchism, that he wished me well, but doubted the success of my work, for (he said) *on ne comprend rien que ce qu' on aime*. Of this remark I have always had a keen recollection. If that great savant and gentle being, the St. John of the Anarchists, thinks thus, what shall I have to expect from his passionate fellow-disciples, or from the terror-blinded opponents of Anarchism? "We cannot understand what we do not love," and unfortunately we do not love unvarnished truth. Anarch-

ists will, therefore, simply deny my capacity to write about their cause, and call my book terribly reactionary; Socialists will think me too much of a "Manchester Economist"; Liberals will think me far too tolerant towards the Socialistic disturbers of their peace; and Reactionaries will roundly denounce me as an Anarchist in disguise. But this will not dissuade me from my course, and I shall be amply compensated for these criticisms which I have foreseen by the knowledge of having advanced real and serious discussion on this subject. For only when we have ceased to thrust aside the theory of Anarchism as madness from the first, only when we have perceived that one can and must understand many things that we certainly cannot like, only then will Anarchists also place themselves on a closer human footing with us, and learn to love us as men even though they often perhaps cannot understand us, and of their own accord abandon their worst argument, the bomb.

E. V. ZENKER.





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PART I

EARLY ANARCHISM

“A hundred fanatics are found to support a theological or metaphysical statement, but not one for a geometric theorem.”

CESARE LOMBROSO.



CHAPTER I

PRECURSORS AND EARLY HISTORY

Forerunners and Early History Definitions—Is Anarchism a Pathological Phenomenon?—Anarchism Considered Sociologically—Anarchist Movements in the Middle Ages—The Theory of the Social Contract with Reference to Anarchism—Anarchist Movements during the French Revolution—The Philosophic Premises of the Anarchist Theory—The Political and Economic Assumptions of Anarchism.

“ Die Welt wird alt und wird wieder jung
Doch der Mensch hofft immer auf Besserung.”



ANARCHY means, in its ideal sense, the perfect, unfettered self-government of the individual, and, consequently, the absence of any kind of external government. This fundamental formula, which in its essence is common to all actual and real Theoretical Anarchists, contains all that is necessary as a guide to the distinguishing features of this remarkable movement. It demands the unconditional realisation of freedom, both subjectively and objectively, equally in political and in economic life. In this, Anarchism is distinct from

Liberalism, which, even in its most radical representatives, only allows unlimited freedom in economic affairs, but has never questioned the necessity of some compulsory organisation in the social relationships of individuals; whereas Anarchism would extend the Liberal doctrine of *laissez faire* to all human actions, and would recognise nothing but a free convention or agreement as the only permissible form of human society. But the formula stated above distinguishes Anarchism much more strongly (because the distinction is fundamental) from its antithesis, Socialism, which out of the celebrated trinity of the French Revolution has placed another figure, that of Equality, upon a pedestal as its only deity. Anarchism and Socialism, in spite of the fact that they are so often confused, both intentionally and unintentionally, have only one thing in common, namely, that both are forms of idolatry, though they have different idols, both are religions and not sciences, dogmas and not speculations. Both of them are a kind of honestly meant social mysticism, which, anticipating the partly possible and perhaps even probable results of yet unborn centuries, urge upon mankind the establishment of a terrestrial Eden, of a land of the absolute Ideal, whether it be Freedom or Equality. It is only natural, in view of the difficulty of creating new thoughts, that our modern seekers after the millennium should look for their Eden by going backwards, and should shape it on the lines of stages of social progress that have long since been passed by; and in this is seen the irremediable internal contradiction of both move-

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ments : they intend an advance, but only cause retrogression.

.

Are we, then, to take Anarchism seriously, or shall we pass it by merely with a smile of superiority and a deprecating wave of our hand ? Shall we declare war to the knife against Anarchists, or have they a claim to have their opinions discussed and respected as much as those of the Liberals or Social Democrats, or as those of religious or ecclesiastical bodies ? These questions we can only answer at the conclusion of this book ; but at this point I should like to do away with one conception of Anarchism which is frequently urged against it.

Those who wish nowadays to seem particularly enlightened and tolerant as regards this dangerous movement, describe it as a " pathological phenomenon." We have done our best to make some sense of this mischievous, though modern, analogy, but have never succeeded, in spite of Lombroso, Kraft-Ebing, and others undeniably capable in their own department. The former, in his clever book on this subject,¹ has confused individual with social pathology. When Lombroso completely identified the Anarchist theory and idea—with which he is by no means familiar—with the persons engaged in Anarchist actions, and made an attempt (which is certainly successful) to trace the political methods of thought and action of a great many of them to

¹ Cesare Lombroso, *The Anarchists, a Study in Criminal Psychology and Sociology*. (German translation by Dr. Hans Kneller, after the 2d edition of the original. Hamburg, 1895.)

pathological premises, he reached the false conclusion that Anarchism itself was a pathological phenomenon. But in reality the only conclusion from his demonstration is that many unhealthy and criminal characters adopt Anarchism, a conclusion which he himself admits in this remark, that "Criminals take part specially in the beginnings of insurrections and revolutions in large numbers, for, at a time when the weak and undecided are still hesitating, the impulsive activity of abnormal and unhealthy characters preponderates, and their example then produces epidemics of excesses." This fact we fearlessly acknowledge; and it gains a special significance for us in that the Anarchists themselves base their system of "propaganda by action" upon this knowledge. But if we are therefore to call this phenomenon a symptom that Anarchism itself is a pathological phenomenon, to what revolutionary movement might we not then apply this criterion, and what would it imply if we did?

I have stated, and (I hope) have shown elsewhere¹ what may be understood by "pathological" social phenomena, namely, an abnormal unhealthy condition of the popular mind in the sense of a general aberration of the intellect of the masses, as is possibly the case in what is known as Anti-Semitism. But even in this limited sense it appears quite inadmissible and incorrect to call Anarchism a pathological phenomenon. Let us be fair and straightforward, if we wish to learn; let us be just, even if

¹ *Rupticism, Pietism, and Anti-Semitism at the Close of the Nineteenth Century*, a study in social history. Vienna, 1894.

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we are to benefit our most dangerous enemies; for in the end we shall benefit ourselves. With Anarchism there is no question of transitory anomalies of the public mind, but of a well defined condition which is visibly increasing and which is necessarily connected with all previous and accompanying conditions; it is a question of ideas and opinions which are the logical, even if in practice inadmissible, development of views that have long been well known and recognised by the majority of civilised men. A further test of every unhealthy phenomenon, namely, its local character, is entirely lacking in Anarchism; for we meet with it to-day extending all over the world, wherever society has developed in a manner similar to our own; we meet it not merely in one class, but see members of all classes, and especially members of the upper classes, attach themselves to it. The fathers, as we may call them, of the Anarchist theory are almost entirely men of great natural gifts, who rank high both intellectually and morally, whose influence has been felt for half a century, who have been born in Russia, Germany, France, Italy, England, and America, men who are as different one from another as are the circumstances and environment of their respective countries, but who are all of one mind as regards the theory which we mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

And that is what Anarchism undoubtedly is: a theory, an idea, with all the failings and dangers, but also with all the advantages which a theory always possesses, with just as much, and only as

much, validity as a theory can demand as its due, but at any rate a theory which is as old as human civilisation, because it goes back to the most powerful civilising factor in humanity.

The care for the bare necessities of life, the inexorable struggle for existence, has aroused in mankind the desire for fellow-strugglers, for companions. In the tribe his power of resistance was increased, and his prospect of self-support grew in proportion as he developed together with his fellows into a new collective existence. But the fact that, notwithstanding this, he did not grow up like a mere animal in a flock, but in such a way that he always—even if often only after long and bitter experience—found his proper development in the tribe—this has made him a man and his tribe a society. Which is the more ancient and more sacred, the unfettered rights of the individual or the welfare of the community? Can anyone take this question seriously who is accustomed to look at the life and development of society in the light of facts? Individualism and Altruism are as inseparably connected as light and darkness, as day and night. The individualistic and the social sense in human society correspond to the centrifugal and centripetal forces in the universe, or to the forces of attraction and repulsion that govern molecular activity. Their movements must be regarded simply as manifestations of forces in the direction of the resultants, whose components are Individualism and Altruism. If, to use a metaphor from physics, one of these forces was excluded, the body

would either remain stock-still, or would fly far away into infinity. But such a case is, in society as in physics, only possible in imagination, because the distinction between the two forces is itself only a purely mental separation of one and the same thing.

This is all that can be said either for or against the exclusive accentuation of any one single social force. All the endeavours to create a realm of unlimited and absolute freedom have only as much value as the assumption, in physics, of space absolutely void of air, or of a direction of motion absolutely uninfluenced by the force of gravity. The force which sets a bullet in motion is certainly something actual and real; but the influence which would correspond to this force, this direction in the sense in which the physicist distinguishes it, exists only in theory, because the bullet will, as far as all actual experience goes, only move in the direction of a resultant, in which the impetus given to it and the force of gravity are inseparably united and appear as one. If, therefore, it is also clear that the endeavour to obtain a realm of unconditional freedom contradicts *ipso facto* the conception of life, yet all such endeavours are by no means valueless for our knowledge of human society, and consequently for society itself; and even if social life is always only the resultant of different forces, yet these forces themselves remain something real and actual, and are no mere fiction or hypothesis; while the growing differentiation of society shows how freedom, conceived as a force, is something actual, although as an ideal it may never attain full realisation. The

development of society has proceeded hand in hand with a conscious or more often unconscious assertion of the individual, and the philosopher Hegel could rightly say that the history of the world is progress in the consciousness of freedom. At all events, it might be added, the statement that the history of the world is progress in the consciousness of the universal interdependence of mankind would have quite as much justification, and practically also just the same meaning.

The circumstance that, apart from the events of what is comparatively a modern period, the great social upheavals of history have not taken place expressly in the name of freedom, although they have indisputably implied it, only proves that in this case we have to deal not with a mere word or idea, but with an actual force which is active and acting, without reference to our knowledge or consciousness of it. The recognition of individual freedom, and much more the endeavour to make it the only object of our life, are certainly of quite recent date. But these presuppose a certain amount of progress in the actual process of setting the individual free in his moral and political relationships, which is not to be found in the whole of antiquity, and still less in the middle ages.

It is not possible to point to clearer traces of Anarchist influences in the numberless social religious revolutions of the close of the middle ages, without doing violence to history, although, as in all critical periods, even in that of the Reformation,—which cer-

tainly implied a serious revolt against authority,—there was no lack of isolated attempts to make the revolt against authority universal, and to abolish authority of every kind. We find, for instance, in the thirteenth century, a degenerate sect of the “ Beghards,” who called themselves “ Brothers and Sisters of the Free Spirit,” or were also called “ Amalrikites,” after the name of their founder.¹ They preached not only community of goods but also of women, a perfect equality, and rejected every form of authority. Their Anarchist doctrines were, curiously enough, a consequence of their Pantheism. Since God is everything and everywhere, even in mankind, it follows that the will of man is also the will of God; therefore every limitation of man is objectionable, and every person has the right, indeed it is his duty, to obey his impulses. These views are said to have spread fairly widely over the east of France and part of Germany, and especially among the Beghards on the Rhine.² The “ Brothers and Sisters of the Free Spirit ” also appear during the Hussite wars under the name of “ Adamites ”; this name being given them because

¹ Amalrich of Bena, near Chartres, was, about 1200 A.D., a professor of theology at Paris. He had to defend himself before Pope Innocent III. on a charge of pantheistic teaching, and then recanted. His follower, David of Dinant, however, continued his work after his master's death (in 1206 or 1207), and this caused a condemnation of Amalrich's teaching by the Synod of Paris in 1210, and by the Lateran Council in 1215, and also led to a severe persecution of the Amalrikites.

² E. Bernstein and K. Kautsky, *Die Vorläufer des Neueren Socialismus*, Stuttgart, 1895. Part i., pp. 169 and 216.

they declared the condition of Adam to be that of sinless innocence. Their enthusiasm for this happy state of nature went so far that they appeared in their assemblies, called "Paradises," literally in Adamite costume, that is, quite naked.

But that, in spite of all this, the real Communism of this sect went no farther than a kind of patriarchal Republicanism, certainly not as far as actual Anarchy, is proved by the information given by Æneas Sylvius: that they certainly had community of women, but that it was nevertheless forbidden to them to have knowledge of any woman without the permission of their leader.

There is one other sect met with during the Husite wars in Bohemia, which bears some similarity to the Anarchical Communism of the present day, that of the Chelčicians.¹ Peter of Chelčic, a peaceful Taborite, preached equality and Communism; but this universal equality should not (he said) be imposed upon society by the compulsion of the State, but should be realised without its intervention. The State is sinful, and an outcome of the Evil One, since it has created the inequality of property, rank, and place. Therefore the State must disappear; and the means of doing away with it consists not in making war upon it, but in simply ignoring it. The true follower of this theory is thus neither allowed to take any office under the State nor call in its help; for the true Christian strives after good of his own accord, and must not compel us to follow it, since God desires good to be

¹ *Vorläufer des Neueren Socialismus*, Pt. i., p. 230.

done voluntarily. All compulsion is from the Evil One; all dignities or distinctions of classes offend against the law of brotherly love and equality. This pious enthusiast easily found a small body of followers in a time when men were weary of war after the cruelties of the Hussite conflicts; but here, too, his theory developed in practice into a kind of Quietism under priestly control, an austere Puritanism, which is the very opposite of the personal freedom of Anarchism.

Once more the Anarchist views of the Amalrikite appear at the beginning of the sixteenth century among the Anabaptists in the sect of the "Free Brothers," who considered themselves set free from all laws by Christ, had wives and property in common, and refused to pay either taxes or tithes, or to perform the duties of service or serfdom.¹ The "Free Brothers" had a following in the Zürich highlands, but they were of no more importance than the other sect, we have mentioned; utterly incomprehensible to those of their own time, they formed the extreme wings of the widespread Communist movement which, coming at the same time as the Reformation in the Church, separates the (so-called) middle ages from modern times like a boundary line. We observe in it nothing but the naïvely logical development of a belief that is common to most religions: the assumption of a happy age in the childhood of mankind (Golden Age, Paradise,

¹ "*Der Wideräufferen vosprung, fürgang, Secten v.s.w. . . . beschreiben durch Heinerrychen Bullingern. . . .*" Zurich, 1561. Fol. 32.

and so on), when men followed merely the laws of reason (Morality, God, or Nature, or whatever else it is called), and needed no laws or punishments to tell them to do right and avoid wrong; when mankind, as every schoolboy knows from his Ovid,—

“Vindice nullo

Sponte sua sine lege fidem rectumque colebat;
Poena metusque aberant, nec verba minacia fixo
Ære legebantur, nec supplex turba timebat
Judicis ora sui, sed erant sine iudice tuti.”

The transition from this primeval Anarchy to the present condition of society has been presented by religion, both Græco-Roman and Judaic-Christian, as the consequence of a deterioration of mankind (“the Fall”), and as a condition of punishment, which is to be followed, in a better world and after the work of life has been well performed, by another life as Eden-like as the first state of man, and eternal. But it must not be forgotten that Christianity was at first a proletarian movement, and that a great part of its adherents certainly did not join it merely with the hope of a return to the original state of Paradise in a future world. Perhaps (thought they) this Paradise might be attainable in this world. It can be seen that the Church had originally nothing to lose by at least not opposing this hope of a millennium¹; and so we see not only heretics like Kerinthos, but also pillars of orthodoxy, like Papios of Hieropolis, Irenæus, Justin Martyr, and others, preaching the doctrine of the

¹ Or, from the Greek, *chiliad*; and hence the word *chiliasm*, expressing the belief in a millennium.

millennium. In later times, indeed, when the Church had long since ceased to be a mainly proletarian movement, and when Christianity had risen from the Catacombs to the palace and the throne, the hopes of the poor and oppressed for an approaching millennial reign lost their harmless character, and "Millennialism" became *ipso facto* heresy. But this heresy was, as may be understood, not so easy to eradicate; and when, in the closing centuries of the middle ages, the material position of large classes of people had again become, in spite of Christianity, most serious and comfortless, Millennialism awoke again actively in men's minds, and formed the prelude, as well as the Socialist undercurrent, of the Reformation. Some Radical offshoots of this medieval Millennialism we have already noticed in the "Brothers and Sisters of the Free Spirit," the Adamites, Chelčicians, and "Free Brothers."

The presuppositions of this flattering superstition are so deeply founded in the optimism of mankind, that it remained the same even when divested of its religious, or rather its confessional, garment; and could be no more eradicated by the Rationalistic tendency that arose after the Reformation than by the interdict of Rome or the brutal cruelties of ecclesiastical justice.

If we look more closely into the doctrine of the so-called *contrat social*, which was destined to form the programme of the French Revolution, we again recognise without much difficulty the fundamental ideas of the Millennialists, hardly altered at all. A

Paradise without laws, existing before civilisation, which is considered as a curse, and another like unto it, when "this cursed civilisation" is abolished, is what a modern Anarchist would say. The names only are different, and are taken from the vocabulary of Rationalism, instead of from that of religious mythology. Instead of divine rights men spoke now of the everlasting and unalterable rights of man; instead of Paradise, of a happy state of nature, in which there is, however, an exact resemblance to Ovid's golden age, the transition into the present form of society was represented to be due to a social contract or agreement, occasioned, however, by a certain moral degeneracy in mankind, only differing in name from the "Fall." In this case, also, Anarchy is regarded as underlying society as the ideal state of nature; every form of society is only the consequence of the degeneration of mankind, a *pis aller*, or, at any rate, only a voluntary renunciation of the original, inalienable, and unalterable rights of man and nature, the chief of which is Freedom.

In the further development of this main idea the believers in the *contrat social* have been divided. While some, foremost among whom is Hobbes, declared the contract thus formed once and for all as permanent and unbreakable, and hence that the authority of the sovereign was irrevocable and without appeal, and thus arrived at Monarchism pure and simple; others, and these the great majority, regarded the contract merely as provisional, and the powers of the sovereign as therefore limited. In this case everyone is not only free to annul the con-

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tract at any time and place himself outside the limits of society,¹ but the contract is also regarded as broken if the sovereign—whether a person or a body corporate—oversteps his authority. Here the return to the primeval state of Anarchy not only shines, as it were, afar off as a future ideal, but appears as the permanently normal state of mankind, only occasionally disturbed by some transitory form of social life. This idea cannot be more clearly expressed than in the words which the poet Schiller—certainly not an advocate of bombs—puts into the mouth of Stauffacher in *William Tell*:

“ When the oppressed . . .
. . . makes appeal to Heaven
And thence brings down his everlasting rights,
Which there abide, inalienably his,
And indestructible as are the stars,
Nature's primeval state returns again,
Where man stands hostile to his fellow-man.”

How nearly the doctrine of the “ social contract ” corresponds to the idea of Anarchy is shown by the circumstance that one of the first (and what is more, one of the ecclesiastical) representatives of this doctrine, Hooker, declared, that “ it was in the nature of things not absolutely impossible that men could live without any public form of government.” Elsewhere he says that for men it is foolish to let

¹ “ Cette liberté commun est une consequence de la nature de l'homme. Sa première loi est de veiller à sa propre conservation, ses premiers soins sont ceux qu'il se doit à lui-même : et sitôt qu'il est en âge de raison, lui seul étant juge des moyens propres à le conserver, devient par là son propre maître.”—ROUSSEAU.

themselves be guided, by authority, like animals; it would be a kind of fettering of the judgment, though there were reasons to the contrary, not to pay heed to them, but, like sheep, to follow the leader of the flock, without knowing or caring whither. On the other hand, it is no part of our belief that the authority of man over men shall be recognised against or beyond reason. Assemblies of learned men, however great or honourable they may be, must be subject to reason. This refers, of course, only to spiritual and ecclesiastical authority; but Locke, who followed Hooker most closely, discovered only too clearly what the immediate consequences of such assumptions would be, and tried to avoid them by affirming that the power of the sovereign, being merely a power entrusted to him, could be taken away as soon as it became forfeited by misuse, but that the break-up of a government was not a break-up of society. In France, on the other hand, Étienne de la Boétie had already written, when oppressed by the tyranny of Henry II., a *Discours de la Servitude Volontaire, ou Contr'un* (in 1546), containing a glowing defence of Freedom, which goes so far that the sense of the necessity of authority disappears entirely. The opinion of La Boétie is that mankind does not need government; it is only necessary that it should really wish it, and it would find itself happy and free again, as if by magic.

So we see how the upholders of the social contract are separated into a Right, Central, and Left party. At the extreme right stands Hobbes, whom

the defenders of Absolutism follow; in the centre is Locke, with the Republican Liberals; and on the extreme left stand the pioneers of Anarchism, with Hooker the ecclesiastic at their head. But of all the theoretical defenders of the "social contract," only one has really worked out its ultimate consequences. William Godwin, in his *Inquiry concerning Political Justice*,¹ demanded the abolition of every form of government, community of goods, the abolition of marriage, and self-government of mankind according to the laws of justice. Godwin's book attracted remarkable attention, from the novelty and audacity of his point of view. "Soon after his book on political justice appeared," writes a young contemporary, "workmen were observed to be collecting their savings together, in order to buy it, and to read it under a tree or in a tavern. It had so much influence that Godwin said it must contain something wrong, and therefore made important alterations in it before he allowed a new edition to appear. There can be no doubt that both Government and society in England have derived great advantage from the keenness and audacity, the truth and error, the depth and shallowness, the magnanimity and injustice of Godwin, as revealed in his inquiry concerning political justice."

Our next business is to turn from theoretical considerations of the *contrat social* to the practice based upon this catchword; and to look for traces of Anarchist thought upon the blood-stained path of the

¹ London, 1795, 2 vols.

great French Revolution—that typical struggle of the modern spirit of freedom against ancient society. We are the more desirous to do this, because of the frequent and repeated application of the word Anarchist to the most radical leaders of the democracy by the contemporaries, supporters, and opponents of the Revolution. As far as we in the present day are able to judge the various parties from the history of that period,—and we certainly do not know too much about it,—there were not apparently any real Anarchists¹ either in the Convention or the Commune of Paris. If we want to find them, we must begin with the Girondists and not with the Jacobins, for the Anarchists of to-day recognise—and rightly so—no sharper contrast to their doctrine than Jacobinism; while the Anarchism of Proudhon is connected in two essential points with its Girondist precursors—namely, in its protest against the sanction of property and in its federal principle. But, nevertheless, neither Vergniaud nor Brissot was an Anarchist, even though the latter, in his *Philosophical Examination of Property and Theft* (1780), uttered a catchword, afterwards taken up by

¹ Jean Grave says in his book, *La Société Mourante*, p. 21: "In the year 1793 one talked of Anarchists. Only Jacques Roux and the 'suragés' appear to have been those who saw the Revolution most clearly, and wished to turn it to the benefit of the people; and, therefore, the bourgeois historian has left them in the background; their history has still to be written; the documents buried in archives and libraries are waiting for one who shall have time and courage to exhume them, and bring to light the secrets of events that are to us almost incomprehensible. Meanwhile, we can pass no judgment on their programme." Of course we can do so still less.

Proudhon. At the same time, they have no cause and no right to reproach the "Mountain" with Anarchist tendencies.

Neither Danton nor Robespierre, the two great lights of the "Mountain," dreamed of making a leap into the void of a society without government. Their ideal was rather the omnipotence of society, the all-powerful State, before which the interests of the individual were scattered like the spray before the storm; and the great Maximilian, the "Chief Rabbi" of this deification of the State, accordingly called himself "a slave of freedom." Robespierre and Danton, on their side, called the Hebertists Anarchists. If one can speak of a principle at all among these people, who placed all power in the hands of the masses who had no votes, and the whole art of politics in majorities and force, it was certainly not directed against the abolition of authority. The maxims of these people were chaos and the right of the strongest. Marat, the party saint, had certainly, on occasion, inveighed against the laws as such, and desired to set them aside; but Marat all the time wanted the dictatorship, and for a time actually held it. The Marat of after Thermidor was the infamous Caius Gracchus Babœuf, who is now usually regarded as the characteristic representative of Anarchism during the French Revolution—and regarded so just as rightly, or rather as wrongly, as those mentioned above. Babœuf was a more thorough-going Socialist than Robespierre; indeed he was a Radical Communist, but no more. In the proclamation issued by Babœuf for the 22d

of Floreal, the day of the insurrection against the Directoire, he says: "The revolutionary authority of the people will announce the destruction of every other existing authority." But that means nothing more than the dictatorship of the mob; which is rejected in theory by Anarchists of all types, just as much as any other kind of authority. That the followers of Babœuf had nothing else in view is shown by the two placards prepared for this day, one of which said, "Those who usurp the sovereignty ought to be put to death by free men," while the other, explaining and limiting the first, demanded the "Constitution of 1793, liberty, equality, and universal happiness." This constitution of 1793 was, however, Robespierre's work, and certainly did not mean the introduction of Anarchy.

Echoes and traditions of Babœuf's views, often passing through intermediaries like Buonarotti, are found in the Carbonarists of the first thirty years of our own century, and applied to this (as to so many other popular movements) the epithet "Anarchical," so glibly uttered by the lips of the people. But among the chiefs, at least, of that secret society that was once so powerful, we find no trace of it; on the contrary they declared absolute freedom to be a delusion which could never be realised. Yet even here, though the fundamental dogma of Anarchism is rejected, we notice a step forward in the extension of the Anarchist idea. It was indeed rejected by the members of that society, but it was known to them, and what is more, they take account of it, and support every effort which, by encouraging in-

dividualism to an unlimited extent, is hostile to the union of society as such. Thus we even find individual Carbonarists with pronounced Anarchist views and tendencies. Malegari, for instance, in 1835, described the *raison d'être* of the organisation in these words¹: "We form a union of brothers in all parts of the earth; we all strive for the freedom of mankind; we wish to break every kind of yoke."

Between the time when these words were spoken and the appearance of the famous *What is Property?* and the *Individual and his Property*, there elapsed only about ten years. How much since then has been changed, whether for better or worse, how much has been cleared up and confused, in the life and thought of the nations !

Feuerbach described the development which he had passed through as a thinker in the words: "God was my first thought, Reason my second, Man my third and last." Not only Feuerbach, but all modern philosophy, has gone through these stages; and Feuerbach is only different from other philosophers, in having himself assisted men to reach the third and final stage. The epoch of philosophy that was made illustrious by the brilliant trinity of Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibnitz, however far it may have departed or emancipated itself from the traditions of religion, not only never deposed the idea of God, but actually for the first time made the conception of the Deity the starting-point

¹ J. A. M. Brühle: *Die Geheimbunde gegen Rom. Zur Genesis der italien. Revolution.* Prague, 1860.

of all Thought and Existence. The philosophy which abolished this, whether we consider Locke and Hume the realists, or Kant and Hegel the idealists, is philosophy of intellect; absolute reason has taken the place of an absolute God, criticism and dialectics the place of ontology and theocracy. But in philosophy we find the very opposite of the mythological legend, for in it Chronos instead of devouring his children is devoured by them. The critical school turned against its masters, who were already sinking into speculative theology again, quite forgetting that its great leader had introduced a new epoch with a struggle against ontology; and losing themselves in the heights of non-existence, just as if they had never taken their start from the thesis, that no created mind can comprehend the nature of the Being that is behind all phenomena. From such heights a descent had to be made to our earth; instead of immortal individuals, as conceived by Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling, the school of Feuerbach, Strauss, and Bauer postulated "human beings, sound in mind and body, for whom health is of more importance than immortality." Concentration upon this life took the place of vague transcendentalism, and anthropology the place of theology, ontology, and cosmology. Idealism became bankrupt; God was regarded no longer as the creator of man, but man as the creator of God. Humanity now took the place of the Godhead.

The new principle was now a universal or absolute one; but, as with Hegel, universal or absolute only in words, for to sense it is extremely real, just as

Art in a certain sense is more real than the individual. It was the "generic conception of humanity, not something impersonal and universal but forming persons, inasmuch as only in persons have we reality." (D. F. Strauss.)

If philosophic criticism were to go still farther than this, there remained nothing more for it than to destroy this generalisation, and instead of Humanity to make the individual, the person, the centre of thought. A strong individualistic and subjective feature, peculiar to the Kantian and post-Kantian philosophy, favoured such a process. Although in the case of Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling this feature had never outstepped the limits of the purely comprehensible, yet such a trait makes philosophy infer a similarly strongly developed feature of individualism in the people, especially as at that time it was so closely connected with popular life. Moreover, at that period there was a great desire (as we see in Fichte and his influence on the nation) to translate philosophy at once into action; and so it was not remarkable that a thinker regardless of consequences should introduce the idea of individualism into the field of action, and regard this also as suitable for "concentration of thought upon this present life." Herewith began a new epoch; just as formerly human thought had proceeded from the individual up to the universal, so now it descended from the highest generalisation down again to the individual; to the process of getting free from self followed the regaining of self.

Here was the point at which an Anarchist philo-

sophy could intervene, and, as a matter of fact did intervene, in Stirner.

In another direction also, and about the same time, the critical philosophy had reached a point beyond which it could not go without attacking not only the changing forms, but also the very foundations of all organisations of society which were then possible. However far the Aufklärer, the Encyclopædists, the heedless fighters in the political revolution, and the leading personages in the spiritual revolution, had gone in their unsparing criticism of all institutions and relationships of life, they had not as yet, except in a few isolated cases, attacked Religion, the State, and Property, as such in the abstract.

However manifold and transitory their various forms might be, these three things themselves still seemed to be the incontrovertible and necessary conditions of spiritual, political, and social life, merely the different concrete formulæ for the one absolute idea which could not be banished from the thought of that age.

But if we approach these three fundamental ideas with the probe of scientific criticism, and resolutely tear away the halo of the absolute, it does not on that account seem necessary for us to declare that they are valueless or even harmful in life. We read Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, and put it down perhaps with the conviction that the usually recognised sources of inspired information as to revealed religion and the divine mission of Christianity are an

unskilful compilation of purely apocryphal documents; but are we on that account to deny the importance of Judaism and Christianity in social progress and ethics? Or again, I may read E. B. Tyler's *Primitive Culture* and see the ideas of the soul and God arise from purely natural and (for the most part) physiological origins, just as we can trace the development of the skilful hand of Raphael or Liszt from the fore-limbs of an ape; but am I from that to conclude that the idea of religion is harmful to society? It is just the same with the ideas of the State and Property. Modern science has shown us beyond dispute the purely historical origin of both these forms of social life; and both are, at least as we find them to-day, comparatively recent features of human society. This, of course, settles the question as to the State and Property being inviolable, or being necessary features of human society from everlasting to everlasting; but the further question as to how far these forms are advantages and *relatively* necessary for society in general, or for a certain society, has nothing to do with the above, and cannot be answered by the help of a simple logical formula. But though this fact seems so clear to us, it is even to-day not by any means clear to a great portion of mankind. And how much less clear it must have been to thinkers at the beginning of this century when thought was still firmly moulded upon the conception of the Absolute. To them there could only be either absolute Being or absolute Not-Being; and as soon as ever critical philosophy destroyed the idea of the "sacredness" of the in-

stitutions referred to (Property and the State), it was almost unavoidable that it should declare them to be "unholy," *i. e.*, radically bad and harmful. The logic which underlies this process of thought is similar to that which concludes that if a thing is not white it must be black. But it cannot be denied that just at this time—during the celebrated *dix ans* after the Revolution of July—many circumstances seemed positively to favour such an inference.

Not only were economic conditions unsatisfactory (though pauperism alone will never produce Anarchism), but even hope and faith had gone. Idealism was bankrupt, not only in the political but also in the economic world. Full of the noblest animation, and with the most joyous confidence, the French nation had entered upon the great Revolution, and all Europe had looked full of hope towards France, whence they expected to see the end of all tyranny and—since such things at that time were not well understood—the end of all misery. We may be spared the detailed description of the transition by which this hope and these childish expectations, this Millennialism, were bitterly disillusioned, and how the excitement of 1789 to 1791 ended in a great wail of woe; and that too not only in France, where absolute monarchy *post tot discrimina verum* had merely changed into an absolute empire, but also in Germany, whose princes hastened to recall the concessions made under the pressure of the Revolution. The monarchs of Europe then celebrated an orgie of promise-breaking, from which even to-day the simple mind of the people revolts with

deep disgust. It need only be remembered how in the Napoleonic wars of Germany noble princes exploited the flaming enthusiasm and the naïve confidence of their people for their own dynastic purposes, and then, after the downfall of the Corsican, drove them back again through the old Caudine yoke. If, after such unfortunate experiences, the people, and especially the insatiate elements amongst them, had retained any remains of confidence in help from above, it must have perished in the sea of disgust and bitterness at the Revolution of July.

In a struggle for a free form of the State, which lasted almost half a century, the proletariat and its misery had grown without cessation. They had fought for constitutional monarchy, for the Republic, and for the Empire; they had tried Bourbons and Bonapartes and Orleanists; they had gone to the barricades and to the field of battle for Robespierre, Napoleon, and finally for Thiers; but of course their success was always the same: not only their economic position, but also the social condition of the lower masses of the people had remained unchanged. It was recognised more and more that between the proletariat and the upper classes there was something more than a separation of mere constitutional rights; in fact, that the privileges of wealth had taken the place of the privileges of birth; and the more the masses recognised this the more did their interest in purely political questions, and, above all, the question as to the form of the State, sink into the background, while it became more and more clearly seen that the equality of constitutional

rights was no longer real equality, and that the attainment of equality necessitated the abolition of all privileges, including also the privilege of free possession or of property. Henceforth, therefore, every revolutionary power attacks no longer political points but the question of property, and even though all movements did not proceed so far as to open Communism, yet they were animated by the main idea that the question of human poverty was to be solved only by limitation of the right of free acquisition, possession, and disposal of property.

The dogma of the sanctity of property was in any case gone for ever. But still the last dogma, that of the inviolability of the State, remained. The Franco-German Socialists of the third and fourth decades of our century, Saint-Simon, Cabet, Weitling, Rodbertus, down to Louis Blanc himself, did not think of denying the State as such, but had thought of it as playing the principal part in the execution of their new scheme of organisation of industry and society. But the very character of the new reforming tendencies necessitated an unlimited preponderance of State authority which would crush out the freedom of decision in the individual. And a directly opposite tendency, opposed to all authority, could appear, therefore,—though certainly from the nature of the case necessary,—at first only as a very feeble opposition.

The principle of equality was not disputed, but the use of brute force through the power of the State was regarded with horror in the form in which the followers of Babœuf, the enthusiasts for Uto-

pianism, preached it. The necessity for an organisation of industry was not denied, but men began to ask the question whether this organisation could not proceed from below upwards till it reached freedom? Already Fourier's phalanxes might be regarded as such an attempt to organise industry through the formation of free groups from below upwards; an attempt to which the Monarchists and Omniarchists are merely an exterior addition. If we leave out of consideration the rapid failure of the various Socialistic attempts at institutions based upon the foundation of authority, yet the sad experiences of half a century filled with continual constitutional changes would have sufficed to undermine the respect for authority as such. Absolute monarchy as well as constitutional, the Republic just as much as Imperialism, the dictatorship of an individual just as much as that of the mob, had all alike failed to remove pauperism, misery, and crime, or even to alleviate them; was it not then natural for superficial minds to conclude that the radical fault lay in the authoritative form of society in the State as such? did not the thought at once suggest itself that a further extension of Fourier's system of the formation of groups on the basis of the free initiative of the individual might be attempted without taking the State into account at all? But here was a further point at which a system of social and political Anarchism might begin with some hope of success, and here it actually did begin with Proudhon.



CHAPTER II

PIERRE JOSEPH PROUDHON

Biography—His Philosophic Standpoint—His Early Writings—The "Contradictions of Political Economy"—Proudhon's Federation—His Economic Views—His Theory of Property—Collectivism and Mutualism—Attempts to Put his Views into Practice—Proudhon's Last Writings—Criticism.



HE man who had such a powerful, not to say fateful, influence upon the progress of the proletarian movement of our century was himself one of the proletariat class by birth and calling.

Pierre Joseph Proudhon was born 15th January, 1809, in a suburb of Besançon. His father was a cooper, his mother a cook; and Pierre Joseph, in spite of his thirst for knowledge, had to devote himself to hard work, instead of completing his studies; he became a proofreader in some printing works at Besançon, and as a journeyman printer wandered all through France. Having returned to Besançon, he entered the printing house again as a factor. In the year 1836 he founded, with a fellow-workman in the same town, a little printing shop,

which, however, he wound up after his partner had died in 1838, being determined to change the occupation he had followed so far, for another for which he had already long been preparing by diligent study both during his wanderings and in his leisure hours in past years. Proudhon's activity as an author began in the year 1837. The Academy at Besançon had to award a three years' scholarship, which had been founded by Suard, the secretary of the French Academy, for poor young men of Franche-Comte who wished to devote themselves to a literary or scientific career. Proudhon entered as a competitor, and won the scholarship. In the memoir of his life, which he drew up for the Academy, he said: "Born and reared in the midst of the working classes, to which I belong with my heart and in my affections, and above all by the community of sufferings and aspirations, it will be my greatest joy, if I receive the approval of the Academy, to work unceasingly with the help of philosophy and science, and with the whole energy of my will and all my mental powers, for the physical, moral, and intellectual improvement of those whom I call brothers and companions, in order to sow amongst them the seeds of a doctrine which I consider as the law of the moral world, and hoping to succeed in my endeavours, to appear before you, gentlemen, as their representative." As to the studies to which he devoted himself in Paris for several years after receiving the scholarship, Proudhon relates himself that he received light, not from the socialistic schools which then existed and were coming into fashion, not from

partisans or from journalists, but that he began with a study of the antiquities of Socialism, a study which, according to his opinion, was absolutely necessary in order to determine the theoretical and practical laws of the social movement.

It gives us a somewhat strange sensation to learn that Proudhon, the father of Anarchism, made these sociological studies in the Bible; and this Book of books is even to-day the most important source of empiric sociology. For no other book reflects so authentically and elaborately the development of an important social Individualism, and in Proudhon's time the Bible (in view of the complete lack of ethnographic observations which then prevailed) was also almost the only source of studies of this kind. And if also it must be admitted that these studies could not fail to be one-sided, yet it cannot be denied that Proudhon proceeded in a way incomparably more correct than most social philosophers have done either before or since, for they have built up their systems generally by deductive and dogmatic methods.

An essay which Proudhon wrote upon the introduction of Sunday rest, from the point of view of morality, health, and the relations of a family estate, brought him a bronze medal from the Academy, and he was able afterwards to say with truth: "My Socialism received its baptism from a learned society, and I have an academy as sponsor"; certainly a remarkable boast for one who denied all authority.

Proudhon appears to have travelled very quickly along the road which led from the regions of faith

to the metaphysics prevailing at that time ; and already he took for his criterion—as he tells us later in his *Confessions*—the proposition (drawn up according to the Hegelian theory, that everything when it is legalised at the same time brings its opposite with it), “ that every principle which is pursued to its farthest consequence arrives at a contradiction when it must be considered false and repudiated; and that, if this false principle has given rise to an institution, this institution itself must be regarded as an artificial product and as a Utopia.” This proposition Proudhon later on formulated as follows: “ Every true thought is conceived in time once, and breaks up in two directions. As each of these directions is the negation of the other and both can only disappear in a higher idea, it follows that the negation of law is itself the law of life and progress, and the principle of continual movement.” Here, indeed, we have Proudhon’s whole teaching; with this magic wand of negation of law he thought he could open the magic world of social problems, and heal up the wounds of the social organisation.

“ My masters,” said Proudhon to his friend Langlois in the year 1848, “ that is those who woke fruitful ideas in me, are three: first of all, the Bible, then Adam Smith, and finally Hegel.” Proudhon always boasted of being Hegel’s pupil, and Karl Marx maintained that it was he who, during his stay in Paris in the year 1844, in debates which often lasted all night long, inoculated Proudhon (to the latter’s great disadvantage) with Hegelianism, which he nevertheless could not properly study owing to

his ignorance of the German language. A well-known anecdote attributes to Hegel the witty saying that only one scholar understood him and he misunderstood him. We do not know who this scholar was, but it might just as well have been Marx as Proudhon, for that which both of them took from the great philosopher, and applied as and how and when they did, is common to both: namely, the dialectic method applied to the problems of social philosophy.

The similarity between them in this respect is so striking that one might call both these embittered opponents the personal antitheses of the great master, Hegel. As for the rest, Proudhon's inoculation with Hegelianism, which was afterwards continued by K. Grün and Bakunin, must have been very marked and continuous, for we shall constantly be meeting with traces of it as we go on. Powerful as was the influence of Hegel upon Proudhon, the Anarchist was but little affected by the fashionable philosophy of his contemporary and fellow-countryman, A. Comte; which is all the more remarkable since it is Comte's Positivism which, proceeding along the lines of Spencer's philosophy, has in no small degree influenced modern Anarchism, while echoes of the Comtian individualist doctrine are even to be found in the German contemporary of Proudhon, Stirner; echoes which, although numerous, are perhaps unconscious. Proudhon attached himself, as already mentioned, specially to the Hegelian dialectic and to the doctrine of Antitheses. Using this criterion, Proudhon

proceeded to the consideration and criticism of social phenomena; and just as beginners and pupils in the difficult art of philosophy, instead of contenting themselves with preliminary questions, attack the very kernel of problems, with all the rashness of ignorance, so Proudhon also attacked, as his first problem, the fundamental social question of property, taking it up for the subject of his much-quoted though much less read work, *What is Property?* (*Qu'est-ce que la Propriété?*—First essay in *Recherches sur le Principe du Droit et du Gouvernement*). Proudhon has been judged and condemned, though, and wrongly, yet almost exclusively, by this one essay, written at the beginning of his literary career. Friends and foes alike have always contented themselves with regarding the celebrated dictum there uttered, Property is Theft, as the Alpha and the Omega of Proudhon's teaching, without reading the book itself. And because it has been thought sufficient to catch up a phrase dragged from all its context, so it has happened that Proudhon to-day, although he is one of the most frequently mentioned authors, is hardly either known or read. Although the question of property forms the corner-stone of all Proudhon's teaching, yet it would be wrong to identify it with his doctrine entirely. And it is no less wrong to represent the first attempt which Proudhon made to solve so great a problem as the whole of his views about property, as unfortunately even serious authors have hitherto done almost without exception, and especially those who make a special study of him, such as Diehl. As a matter

of fact, Proudhon has carefully and elaborately set forth his theory of property in several other works which are mixed up for the most part with his other numerous writings, and has left behind a fragment of a book on the theory of property, in which he meant to produce a comprehensive theory of property as the foundation of his whole work. We must, therefore, in order not to anticipate, leave a complete exposition of Proudhon's theory of property to a later portion of this book, hence we will merely glance at the work, *What is Property?* and also at another study which appeared in 1843 called *The Creation of Order in Humanity*, which shows the second, or I might say, the political side of Proudhon's train of thought in its first beginnings, and of which Proudhon himself said later, that it satisfied neither him nor the public, and was worse than mediocre, although he had very little to retract in its contents. "This book, a veritable infernal machine, which contains all the implements of creation and destruction," he said in his *Confessions*, "is badly done, and is far below that which I could have produced if I had taken time to choose and arrange properly my materials. But however full of faults my work may now appear, it was then sufficient for my purpose. Its object was to make me understand myself. Just as contradiction had been useful to me to destroy, so now the processes of development served me to build up. My intellectual education was completed, the *Creation of Order* had scarcely seen the light, when, with the application of the creative method which followed immediately upon it, I

understood that in order to obtain an insight into the revolution of society the first thing must be to construct the whole series of its antitheses, or the system of opposites."

This was done in the book which appeared at Paris in two volumes in 1846, *The System of Economic Contradictions, or the Philosophy of Misery*, which deserves to be called his masterpiece, both because it contains the philosophic and economic foundations of his theory in a perfectly comprehensive and clear exposition, and because it is impossible to understand Proudhon without a knowledge of these contradictions. In his first work upon property, Proudhon had represented it as something equivalent to theft. But now we have another doctrine proposed: that Property is Liberty. These two propositions were thought by Proudhon to be proved in the same way. "Property considered in the totality of social institutions has, so to speak, two current accounts. One is the thought of the good which it produces, and which flows directly from its nature; the other is the disadvantages which it produces, and the sacrifices which it causes, and which also result directly, just as much as the good, from its nature. In property evil, or the abuse of it, is inseparable from the good, just as in book-keeping by double entry the debtor is inseparable from the creditor side. The one necessarily implies the other. To suppress the abuse of property means to extinguish it, just as much as to strike out an entry on the debtor side means also striking it out on the creditor side of an account." He proceeded

in the same way with all "economic categories." Labour, he tells us in the *Contradictions* more explicitly, is the principle of wealth, the power which creates or abolishes values, or puts them in proportion one to another, and also distributes them. Labour thus in itself, at the same time, is a force that makes for equilibrium and productivity, which one might think should secure mankind against every want. But in order to work, labour must define and determine itself—that is, organise itself. What are, then, the organs of labour, that is, the forms in which human labour produces and fixes values and keeps off want? These forms or categories are: division of labour, machinery, competition, monopoly, the State or centralisation, free exchange, credit, property, and partnership.

However much labour in itself is the source of wealth, yet those means which are invented for the purpose of increasing wealth, become, through their antagonism and through that antithetical character, which, according to Proudhon, lies in the very nature of all social forms, just as many causes of want and pauperism. Labour gains by its division a more than natural fertility, but, at the same time, this divided labour, which debases the workman, sinks, owing to the manner in which this division is carried out, with great rapidity below its own level and only creates an insufficient value. After it has increased consumption by the superfluity of products, it leaves them in the lurch owing to the low rate of pay; instead of keeping off want it actually produces it.

The deficiency caused by the division of labour is said to be filled by machinery, which not only increases and multiplies the productivity of labour, but also compensates for the moral deficiency caused by the division of labour, and supplies a higher unity and synthesis in place of the division of labour. But according to Proudhon this is not the case; with machinery begins the distinction between masters and wage-earners, between capitalists and workmen. Thus mankind, instead of being raised up by machinery from degradation, sinks deeper and deeper. Man loses both his character as a man, and freedom, and becomes only a tool. Prosperity increases for the masters, poverty for the men; the distinction of caste begins, and a terrible struggle becomes manifest, which consists in increasing men in order to be able to do without them. And so the general pressure becomes more and more severe; poverty, already heralded by the division of labour, at last makes its appearance in the world, and henceforth becomes the soul and sinews of society.

As opposed to its aristocratic tendencies, society places freedom or competition. Competition emancipates the workman and produces an incalculable growth in wealth. By competition the productions of labour continually sink in price, or (what comes to the same thing) continually increase in quality; and since the sources of competition, just like mechanical improvements and combinations of the division of labour, are infinite, it may be said that the productive force of competition is unlimited as

regards intensity and scope. At last, by competition, the production of wealth gets definitely ahead of the production of men, by which statement Proudhon destroys the dogma of Malthus, which, we may remark, was no more proved than his own. But this competition is also a new source of pauperism, because the lowering of prices which it brings with it only benefits, on the one hand, those who succeed, and, on the other, leaves those who fail without work and without means of subsistence. The necessary consequence, and, at the same time, the natural antithesis of competition is monopoly. It is that form of social possession without which no labour, no production, no exchange, and no wealth would be possible. It is most intimately connected with individualism and freedom, so that without it we can hardly imagine society, and yet it is, quite as much as competition, anti-social and harmful. For monopoly attracts everything to itself—land, labour, and the implements of labour, productions and the distribution thereof—and annihilates them; or it annihilates the natural equilibrium of production and consumption; it causes the labourer to be deceived in the amount of his reward, and it causes progress in prosperity to be changed into a continual progress in poverty. Finally, it inverts all ideas of justice in commerce.

The State, in its economic relations, should, according to Proudhon, eventuate in an equalisation between the patricians and the proletariat; its regulations (such as taxation) should, in the first place, be an antidote against the arrogance and

excessive power of monopoly; but even the institution of the State fails in its purpose, since taxes, instead of being paid by those who have wealth, are almost exclusively paid by those who have not; the army, justice, peace, education, hospitals, work-houses, public offices, even religion,—in short, everything which is intended for the advance, emancipation, and the relief of the proletariat being first paid for and supported by the proletariat, and then either turned against it or lost to it altogether.

It would be useless to repeat what Proudhon says about the beneficial, and at the same time fateful, consequences both of free-trade and its opposite. Who does not know the arguments which even to-day are used by politicians and savants in the still undecided controversy for and against it?

In this system of contradiction, then, in this antithesis of society, Proudhon believed he had discovered the law of social progress, while as a matter of fact he had only given a very negative proof (though he certainly would hardly have acknowledged it) that there is not in economics any more than in ethics anything absolute, and that "benefit" and "harm" are relative terms which have nothing in common with the essence of things; and it is just as wrong in the one case to regard the existing social order as the best of all possible worlds, as it is in the other to regard any one economic institution as a social panacea, or to blame one or the other for all the evils of an evil world. Such a confession of faith might easily be considered trivial, and it might

even give rise to a supercilious smile if it required nothing less than the doctrine of antithesis taught by Kant and Hegel to be brought in to prove what are obviously matters of fact. But perhaps it is just this superficial smile which is the justification of Proudhon, who had to fight a severe and not always victorious battle for an apparently trivial cause. We do not forget how helplessly the age in which he lived was tossed to and fro in all social questions, from casuistical Agnosticism to arbitrary Dogmatism; from extreme Individualism to Communism, from the standpoint of absolute *laissez faire* to the uttermost reliance on authority. In placing these two worlds in sharp contrast one to another, *Contradictions*, with all its acknowledged faults and errors, performed an undeniable service; and this book—against which Karl Marx has written a severe attack—will retain for all time its value as one of the most important and thorough works of social philosophy. In any case, the net result of the lengthy discussion, in view of the purpose which Proudhon had before him, was absolutely nil. Proudhon certainly endeavoured in his dialectic method to find a solution of antitheses, and to come to some positive result; but even this solution, which was to have been the great social remedy, is, when divested of its philosophical garments, such a general and indefinite draft upon the bank of social happiness that it could never be properly paid.

“I have shewn,” said Proudhon, at the close of his *Contradictions*, “how society seeks in formula after formula, institution after institution, that

equilibrium which always escapes it, and at every attempt always causes its luxury and its poverty to grow in equal proportion. Since equilibrium has never yet been reached, it only remains to hope something from a complete solution which synthetically unites theories, which gives back to labour its effectiveness and to each of its organs its power. Hitherto pauperism has been so inextricably connected with labour, and want with idleness, and all our accusations against Providence only prove our weakness." This solution of the great problem of our century by the synthetic union of economic and social antithesis, or, as Proudhon calls it in another place, by a scientific, legal, immortal, and inseparable combination, is certainly a beautiful and noble philosophy. It cannot be denied that herewith Proudhon, who, in all his works, raged furiously against Utopians, has none the less created a Utopia of his own, not, indeed, by forcibly urging mankind through an ideal change, but by attempting to mould life into an ideal shape without, like others, appealing to force, or venturing to organise the forces of terror, in order to accomplish his ideal.

Just as Proudhon differed from the ready-made Socialism of his age by a conception which he opposed to pauperism, so, too, he differed in the method which he recommended should be adopted for the removal of pauperism. He certainly accepted the proposition that poverty could only be removed by the labourer receiving the entire result of his labour, and that social reform must, accord-

ingly, consist of an organisation of labour. In this he was quite at one with Louis Blanc, but only in this; for while Louis Blanc claimed for the organisation of labour the full authority of the State, Proudhon desired it to arise from the free initiative of the people, without the interference of the State in any way. This is the parting of the roads between Anarchism and authoritative Socialism; here they separate once for all, never to meet again, except in the most violent opposition. This was the starting-point of Proudhon's Anarchist views. The experiences of the Revolution of 1848, which, from the social standpoint, failed entirely, might well have fitted in with these views of his. Proudhon had taken a very active part in the occurrences of this remarkable year, as editor of the *People*, and as a representative of the Department of the Seine, and in other capacities, and thought that the cause of the fruitlessness of all attempts to solve the social problem and to reap the fruits of the Revolution lay in the fact that the Revolution had been initiated from above instead of from below, and because the revolutionary principle had been installed in power, and therefore had destroyed itself. But ultimately the opposition of Proudhon to Blanc goes back to the fundamental difference alluded to above.

Society, as Proudhon explains in his *Contradictions*, and as he applies his doctrine of politics in his book called the *Confessions of a Revolutionary*, written in prison in 1849, is essentially of a dialectic nature and is founded upon opposites, which are all mingled one with another, and the combinations of

which are infinite. The solution of the social problem he finds in placing the different expressions of the problem no longer in contradiction but in their "dialectic developments," so that for example the right to work, to credit, and to assistance, rights whose realisation under an antagonistic legislation is impossible or dangerous, gradually result from an already established, realised, and undoubted right; and so instead of being stumbling-blocks one to another they find in their mutual connection their most lasting guarantee. But since such guarantees should lie in the institutions themselves the authority of the State becomes neither necessary nor justifiable for the carrying out of this revolution.

But why should revolution from above be impossible? The doctrine of antithesis, applied to politics, implies freedom and order. The first is realised by revolution, the second by government. Thus there is here a contradiction; for the government can never become revolutionary for the very simple reason that it is a government. But society alone—that is, the masses of the people when permeated by intelligence—can revolutionise itself, because it alone can express its free will in a rational manner, can analyse and develop and unfold the secret of its destination and its origin, and alter its beliefs and its philosophy.

"Governments are the scourge of God, introduced in order to keep the world in discipline and order. And do you demand that they should annihilate themselves, create freedom, and make revolutions? That is impossible. All revolutions, from the

anointing of the first king to the declaration of the Rights of Man, have been freely accomplished by the spirit of the people. Governments have always hindered, oppressed, and crushed them to the ground. They have never made a revolution. It is not their function to produce movements but to keep them back. And even if they possessed revolutionary science—which is a contradiction of terms—they would be justified in not making use of it. They must first let their knowledge be absorbed by the people in order to receive the support of the citizens, and that would mean to refuse to acknowledge the existence of authority and power.”

It follows through this that the organisation of work by the State—as was attempted by Fourier, Louis Blanc, and their followers in a more or less remote degree—is an illusion, and on this theory revolution can only take place through the initiative of the people itself—“through the unanimous agreement of the citizens, through the experience of the workmen, and through the progress and growth of enlightenment.”

We here have laid bare the yawning gulf which lies between Proudhon and the State Socialism of his time, and over this gulf there is no bridge. We see how from these premises has been developed gradually and logically that which Proudhon himself has called Anarchy (*An-arche*, without government). The Socialists have made the statement that the political revolution is the means of which the social revolution is the end. Proudhon has

inverted this statement and regards the social revolution as the means and a political revolution as the end. It is therefore a great mistake to consider him, as is always done, as a political economist, for he was first and foremost a social politician. The Socialists place as the ultimate object of revolution, the welfare of all, enjoyment; but for Proudhon the principle of revolution is freedom, that is:

(1) Political freedom by the organisation of universal suffrage, by the independent centralisation of social functions, and by the continual and unceasing revision of the constitution.

(2) Industrial freedom through the mutual guarantee of credit and sale. In other words "no government by men by means of the accumulation of power, no exploitation of men by means of the accumulation of capital."

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Proudhon thought that the fault of every political or social constitution, whether it was the work of political or social Radicalism, that which produces conflicts, and sets up antagonism in society, lies in the fact that on the one hand the division of powers, or rather of functions, is badly and incompletely performed, while on the other hand centralisation is insufficient. The necessary consequence of this is that the chief power is inactive and the "thought of the people," or universal suffrage, is not exercised. Division of functions then must be completed, and centralisation must increase; universal suffrage must regain its prerogative and therewith give back to the

people the energy and activity which is lacking to them.

The manner in which Proudhon proposed this constitution of society by the initiative of the masses and the organisation of universal suffrage cannot be better or more simply explained than in the words and examples which he himself has used in the *Confessions* in order to interpret his views. He says:

" For many centuries the spiritual power, according to the traditional conception of it, has been separated from the temporal power. I remark, by the way, that the political principle of the division of powers, or functions, is the same as the principle of the division of the departments of industry or of labour. Here already we see a glimpse of the identity of the political and social constitution. But now I say that the division of the two powers, the spiritual and temporal, has never been complete; and that their centralisation, which was a great disadvantage both for ecclesiastical administration and for the followers of religion, was never sufficient. A complete division would take place if the temporal power never mingled in religious solemnities, in the administration of the sacraments, in the government of parishes, and especially in the nomination of bishops. There would then be a much greater centralisation, and consequently still more regular government, if in every parish the people had the right to choose their clergymen and chaplains themselves, or even not to have any at all; if the priests in every diocese chose their bishops; if the assembly

of bishops alone regulated religious affairs in theological education and in divine worship. By this division the clergy would cease to be a tool of tyranny in the hands of the political power against the people; and by this application of universal suffrage the Church Government, centralised in itself, would receive its inspiration from the people, and not from the Government or from the Pope: it would continually find itself in harmony with the needs of society and with the spiritual condition of the citizens. In order thus to return to organic, economic, and social truth, it is necessary (1) To do away with the constitutional accumulation of power, by taking away the nomination of bishops from the State, and separating once for all spiritual from temporal affairs; (2) To centralise the Church in itself by a system of elective grades; (3) To give to the ecclesiastical power, as to all other powers of the State, the right of voting as its foundation. By this system, that which to-day is 'government' becomes nothing more than administration. And it will be understood if it is possible to organise the whole country in all its temporal affairs, according to the rules which we have just laid down for its spiritual organisation, the most perfect order and the most powerful centralisation would exist without there being anything of what we now call the constituted authority of a government.

"One other example: formerly there existed besides the legislative and executive powers a third, the judicial power. This was an abolition of the dividing dualism, a first step towards the complete

separation of political functions as of the departments of industry. The judicial functions—with their different specialties, their hierarchy, their irremovability, their union in a single ministry—testify undoubtedly to their privileged position and their efforts towards centralisation. But these functions do not arise from the people upon whom they are exercised; their purpose is the administration of executive power; they are not subordinated to the country by election, but to the Government, president, or princes, by nomination. The consequence is that the liberties of the people who are judged are given into the hands of those who are supposed to be their natural judges, like parishioners into the hands of their pastor, so that the people belong to the magistrates as an inheritance, while the litigants exist for the sake of the judge, and not the judge for the sake of the litigants. Apply universal suffrage and the system of elective grades to judicial functions in the same way as to ecclesiastic; take away their irremovability which is the denial of the right of election; take away from the State all action and influence upon the judges; let this order, centralised in and for itself, arise solely from the people, and you have taken away from the State its most powerful implement of tyranny. You have made out of justice a principle of freedom and order, and unless you suppose that the people from whom, by means of universal suffrage, all power must proceed is in contradiction with itself, and that it does not wish in the case of justice what it wishes in the case of religion, or *vice versa*, you may rest

assured that the division of power can produce no conflict. You can confidently establish the principle that division and equilibrium will in future be synonymous.

“ I pass over to another case, to the military power. It belongs to the citizens to nominate their military commanders in due order, by advancing simple privates and national guards to the lower grades and officers to the higher grades in the army. Thus organised the army maintains its citizen-like sentiment. There is no longer a nation in a nation, a country in a country, a kind of wandering colony where the citizen is a citizen amongst soldiers, and learns to fight against his own country. The nation itself, centralised in its strength and youth, can, independently of the power of the State, appeal to the public power in the name of the law, just like a judge or police official, but cannot command it or exercise authority over it. In the case of a war the army owes obedience only to the representative assembly of the nation, and to the leaders appointed by it.

“ It is clear that in this, no judgment is passed upon the necessity of these great manifestations of the social mind, and that if we wish to abide by the judgment of the people, which alone is competent to decide as to the importance and duration of its institutions, we can do nothing better (as has just been said) than to constitute them in a democratic manner.

“ Societies have at all times experienced the need of protecting their trade and industry against foreign imports; the power or function which protects native labour in each country and guarantees it a

national market, is taxation in the shape of Customs. I will not here say anything at all about the morality, or want of it, the usefulness or the harm of Customs duties. I take it as I see it in society, and confine myself to examining it from the point of view of the constitution of powers. Taxation, by the very fact that it exists, is a centralised function. Its origin like its action, excludes every idea of division or dismemberment. But how does it happen that this function, which belongs specially to the province of merchants and those concerned with industry, and proceeds exclusively from the authority of the Chambers of Commerce, yet belongs to the State? Who can know better than industry itself wherein and to what extent it requires protection, where the compensation for the taxation which has to be raised must come from, and what products require bounties and encouragement? And as for the Customs service itself, is it not obvious that it is the business of those interested to reckon up the expenses of it, while it is not at all suitable for the Government to make of it a source of emolument for its favourites by procuring an income for its extravagances by differential taxes?

“ Besides the ministries of justice, religion, war, and international trade, the Government appoints yet others; the ministry for agriculture, public works, public instruction, and finally to pay for all these, the ministry of finance. Our so-called division of powers is only an accumulation of all kinds of powers, our centralisation is an absorption. Do you not think that the agriculturists, who are already

all organised in their communities and committees, would perform their own centralisation very well, and could guide their common interests without this being done by the State ? Do you not think that the merchants, manufacturers, agriculturists, the industrial population of every kind, who have their books open before them in the Chambers of Commerce, could in the same way, without the help of the State, without expecting their salvation from its good-will, or their ruin from its inexperience, organise at their own cost a central administration for themselves; could debate their own affairs in general assemblies; could correspond with other administrations; could pass all their useful decisions without waiting for the sanction of the President of the Republic; and could entrust the execution of their will to one amongst themselves, who would be chosen by his fellows to be the Minister ? It is clear that the public works which concern agricultural industry and trade, or the departments and the communes, might in future be assigned to the local and central administrations which have an interest in them; and should no more be a special corporation in the hands of the State than is the army, the customs, or monopolies. Or should the State have its hierarchy, its privileges, its ministry, so that it may carry on a trade in mining, canals, or railways, may speculate on the Stock Exchange, grant leases for ninety-nine years, and leave the building of streets, bridges, dams, water-ways, excavations, sluices, etc., to a legion of contractors, speculators, usurers, destroyers of morality, and ex-

tortioners, who live upon the public wealth by the exploitation of workmen and wage-earners, and upon the folly of the State ?

“ Can it not be believed that public instruction could be just as well made universal, be administered, directed, and that the teachers, professors, and inspectors could be just as well elected, and the system of studies would be just as much in harmony with the habits and interests of the nation if it was the business of municipal and general councils to appoint teachers, while the universities only had to grant them their diplomas; if in public instruction, as in the military career, merit in the lower grades was necessary for promotion to the higher, if our dignitaries of the university must first have gone through the duties of an elementary teacher and supervisor of studies ?

“ Does one imagine that this perfectly democratic system would do harm to the discipline of schools, to morality, education, the dignity of instruction, or the peace of the family ?

“ And as the sinews of every administration are money, as the budget is made for the country and not the country for the budget, as the taxes must every year be granted freely by the representatives of the people, as this is the original and inalienable right of the people both under a monarchy and a republic, since the country must first sanction the income and expenditure before it can be applied by the Government,—does it not follow that the consequence of this financial initiative, which is formally recognised as belonging to the citizens in all our

constitutions, will consist in the fact that the finance minister, or, in a word, the whole fiscal organisation, belongs to the country and not to its ruler; that it depends directly upon those who pay the budget and not upon those who spend it; that there would be infinitely fewer abuses in the administration of public money, fewer extravagances and deficits, if the State had just as little power over public finances as over religion, justice, the army, taxes, public works, and public instruction ?

“ Supposing the heads of the different branches of administration were grouped together, we should have then a council of ministry or an executive power which would serve just as well as a State Council. Place over this a great ‘ jury,’ legislative body, or national assembly, elected and commissioned directly by the whole of the country, whose duty it is not to nominate the ministers, for these receive their office from the members of their special departments, but to look through accounts, to make laws, to draw up the budget, and to decide the differences between the different administrations after having received the report of the Public Minister or the Minister of the Interior, to which in the future the whole Government will be reduced,—and there you would have a centralisation which would be all the stronger the more its different centres were multiplied. You would have responsibility, which is all the more real because the separation between various powers is more sharply defined; you would have a constitution which at the same time is political and social.”

Here we have the picture of the society of the future, as Proudhon imagined it when the principles of democracy and, above all, of universal suffrage have become a reality—the celebrated federative principle of Proudhon, the inheritance of the most talented party of any age, the Girondists, locally developed, and to some extent not without a profound knowledge of politics. It cannot be denied that the federal principle, as Proudhon here explains it, means the integration of social force, which in its differentiation meets us sometimes as a special and sometimes as the common interest, sometimes as Individualism or again as Altruism. According to this, federation is nothing more than the translation into politics of the metaphor (which we formerly used from physics) of the resultants of several component forces; a metaphor which not only suits the genius of Proudhon, but also is frequently found in his language. Proudhon was deeply permeated by the reality of Collectivism, but saw it in the light both of Physics and Physiology, so that the word “resultants” is with him more than a metaphor. In this respect Proudhon far surpassed in insight all the social philosophers of his age, and anticipated the pioneers of modern sociology. But he contradicted himself, and lost his special merits by wishing to make out of a social law an absolute formula; by abandoning the scientific standpoint which he once attained, and falling back again into dogmatism. If we conceive all society in the mechanical manner in which Proudhon did; or if we think (as he did) that we have at least partially discovered the laws of its

movement, then all further politics exhaust themselves in an experimental verification of the laws in question. But to anticipate any point of the development which one expects, and to regard it as something absolute, is a process irreconcilable with an exact scientific method. In brief, Proudhon's federalism is a political principle; his Anarchism is a dogma, or at best an hypothesis which cannot even be logically proved from the first-named, for it is not true, as Proudhon maintains, that the idea of agreement excludes that of lordship.

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But if Proudhon conceives all society in a mechanical manner, it is to be expected that he would again seek—and find—the same laws that he saw operating in the political constitution also in economic life. This is, as a matter of fact, the case. "Agreement solves every problem"; only agreement in economic life means with him exchange. "Social agreement," he says, "is in its essence like the agreement of exchange." Therefore the corner-stone in his economic system is exchange. But Proudhon transposed into this purely empiric idea a moral element, by presupposing equality and justice as necessary to exchange. Economic freedom, he reasons, is free exchange; but an exchange can only be called free which presupposes the equality of values, or, in other words, equality and justice. This again presupposes a just balance and constitution of values—a mutual balance of all economic and social forces. What, then, is eco-

conomic freedom ? It is equality and justice. And what is the opposite—the hindrance of these principles ? It is inequality, injustice, slavery, which means property. This is the reason why Proudhon's doctrine of property stands at the centre of his system, which it by no means exhausts ; it is the reason why he always proceeded from this point, and always returned to it again. Here we have clearly the reason for all his numberless and endless mistakes in the province of economics, the weak point of this otherwise great and noble mind. As we already have remarked about the *Contradictions*, Proudhon did not attack property in itself ; he tried to ennoble it and bring it into harmony with the claims of justice and equality by taking away from it what to-day is a *jus utendi et abutendi*, that is, its rights over the substance of a thing, and the right of devolving it for ever. The ominous statement " Property is Theft " was directed only against this. This kind of property (*propriété, dominium*) was to be replaced by individual possession (*possession individuelle*): as to which one must take care to understand the distinction between " property " and " possession " in the legal sense.

Proudhon sought in his first and larger work, which is mainly of a critical nature, to put forward the negative proof that property is impossible, by inverting all the proofs hitherto brought forward in its favour, so that instead of justifying the possession of property they seemed rather to make for freedom. It is, however, quite wrong to regard this dialectic jugglery as the essence of Proudhon's sys-

tem. A proof, such as that here proposed by Proudhon, is not only quite inadmissible as logic, but it cannot even be said that Proudhon himself (usually so accurate in this respect) turned out here a really good piece of work. On the one hand he attacks the defenders of property, who, after all, are not very difficult to controvert; while, at the same time, his attempt itself does not always succeed. Of course it does not mean very much when he cleverly riddles the old argument for property drawn from divine right or the right of nature; for in any case he was only attacking dead theories. In the attack on really living arguments, as in the case of his theory of labour, he does not succeed.

Property cannot be explained by labour because

- (1) The land cannot be appropriated,
- (2) Labour leads to equality, and in the sight of justice labour, on the contrary, abolishes property.

The proposition that property, *i. e.*, the right to the substance of the thing appropriated, cannot be created by labour, because the land cannot be appropriated, is at least a *petitio principii* or tautology. But, leaving that, let us suppose that the land really cannot be appropriated; yet there is always some kind of property which has nothing to do with the land. It will not do always to speak of landed property only, as Proudhon invariably does. Movable property (in weapons, utensils, ornaments, animals, etc.) precedes immovable property, owing to its origin, which was only created in imitation of the other much later, and is entirely property due to work; thus not only property, but not even the

origin of the idea of property in men, can be explained from the point of view of social history otherwise than by work.

If it is right, as one of our most acute thinkers says, to declare that mankind has placed his tools between himself and the animal world, then another proposition follows directly from this, namely, that man has placed property between himself and animals. It is true that the animal develops as far as the family, for if this also is founded merely upon thought, it cannot be a conscious one. Property presupposes a definite mental equipment, which even in the case of primitive men must be important, implying subjectively an already clear consciousness of self; objectively a certain capacity for measuring even the remoter consequences of an action; for the desire for special possession could only exist with reference to a pronounced consciousness of the self, and to the recognised purpose and further utility of an object. Neither of these mental presuppositions are anywhere fulfilled in the animal world. It need hardly be mentioned that labour in the technical sense has developed naturally and gradually from physiological labour and the bodily functions; that is, that even between the natural implement and the artificial there is no hiatus.

Espinas says (*Animal Communities*, by A. Espinas, p. 338): "Every living being, however lonely its life may be, can in case of need build itself some protective covering, and that is the beginning of the artistic impulse (*Kunst-trieb*), unless, perhaps, this is to be found in the formation of the organism

itself. Leaving out of consideration the tubicolous annelidæ, the mussels and stone-boring molluscs, the weaving caterpillars, and finally spiders, even the non-social hymenoptera present, among many insects, examples of a very skilful adaptation of materials. But it is equally undeniable that, since the appearance of communities whose purpose is the rearing of their offspring, the artistic tendency receives a considerable impulse and produces unexpected marvels. Here it decidedly abandons its usual procedure in order to take up a new one. Hitherto the lower animals have, to a great extent, taken the materials for their places of refuge and their implements from their own bodies: the former an extension of the organism that produces it; the latter, as in the case of the spider, only an enlargement of the animal itself which forms the centre. The productions of the social artistic impulse, on the other hand, are made out of materials which are more and more foreign to the substance of the artificer, and are worked up externally by means which become more and more exclusively mechanical. Hence it follows that the living body is no longer so directly interested in the preservation of its work; it can alter and again build up this structure to an almost infinite extent—in short, the structure becomes more and more an implement instead of an organ. That was the inevitable result of animal life, which, being essentially capable of transference, and presupposing an intercourse of several separate existences, must necessarily raise itself above external substances, or else organise

them according to the purposes of its life. But must we now conceive its operations as altogether distinct from those of physiological life ?

“ If one reflects that unnoticed steps connect the unconscious work which produces the organ with the conscious work which produces the implement, then it does not appear so. Speaking exactly, the waxen cell in which the larvæ of the bee wait for their daily food is external for every individual of the race, but internal for the whole of the community; since this forms one single consciousness, or a collective individuality. The mind of the race is to some extent a common function, its body a common apparatus; the one is only the material translation of the other, and the implement performs its function as faithfully as does the organ. One might even go farther and maintain that the implement in the full sense of the word is an organ; for it serves a function that is vital for the community, and this is exposed to every change, and derives benefit from every growth which circumstances bring to it.”

The work of animals, therefore, only differs in its highest developments from purely physiological functions, in that the animal becomes more independent of its implements and of the product of its labour. Notice, for instance, the progress which is shown in the series of the mussel's shell, the spider's web, the bee's cell, the bird's nest, and the mole's burrow. The progressive differentiation of the products of labour keeps step with the progressive individualisation of the labourer and with the growing material independence of the body from its products. Mussel

shell, cobweb, and bee's cell are still produced from the secretions of the body; but while the mussel is inseparable from its shell, the spider, at least without immediate harm, can be detached from its web; while the bee is still further emancipated from its structure of cells. The bird's nest and the mole's burrow have been formed already by a manipulation of materials foreign to the body, though in the case of the first still by the help of secretions from the body. In both cases the animal is almost completely independent of its product. Still the most complicated product of animal labour is, after all, connected inseparably with the body of the worker; and to a much less extent can the animal be separated from its implements; therefore complete emancipation never takes place in the animal world.

Even in the case of the anthropoid apes the transition to the instrument and to a product of labour entirely artificial and perfectly independent of the animal's own body, is only very slowly completed. This is clear from a consideration of the slow process by which man has progressed in perfecting the implements which he has invented. From the action of the bird which beats open a nut with its beak, or the squirrel which cracks it with its teeth, up to that of man who, in order to open the nut, makes use of a stone lying near him, is only a step, and yet by that step the destiny of the *genus homo* is settled. The application of natural objects, such as sticks and stones, to the purposes of daily life, to defence against animals and men, to hunting, to cutting down fruits, and so on, does not certainly become a

habit all at once. Indeed, a very long time elapsed before this adaptation became a general and even a conscious one, and it was only possible when the advantages of such objects had been perceived through many experiences.

It needed a still longer time before man learned to choose between the various objects offered to him by nature, and understood how to distinguish a more pointed and sharper or a harder stone from one of those less useful for his purpose. Perhaps it required the experience and disappointments of uncounted ages to bring the consciousness of purpose even up to this point. But when this was once done, when man could judge as to the usefulness of the implement which nature offered him, then a further step of progress, and certainly the most important in this series of developments, was taken. To natural selection follows immediately artificial. The need for suitable and useful implements became more general and greater, and at the same time it became more difficult to satisfy, since nature is not so generous with objects of this kind, and (as was soon seen) only very few substances united all these qualities which hitherto had been recognised as necessary or useful. But by this time individuals who were already better provided for had made other discoveries; they had, for example, in cracking a nut, broken a stone with which they cracked it, and noticed that the broken pieces had greater sharpness and pointedness on their edges than those which nature afforded; or they had found the pieces of some tree split by lightning, and dis-

covered their greater hardness and capacity for resistance. What was more natural under the pressure of the necessity, than to produce intentionally those processes by which the objects afforded by nature became more usable—to break the stone in pieces or to burn the wood ?

And now at last the artificial implement was produced, and all future progress was but a trifle compared to the development which had gone before. The wonders of modern technical art are child's-play compared to the difficulties with which the anthropoid ape succeeded in making the first stone celt. The most urgent need of primitive life, the bitterest competition for the necessities of existence, and the concentration of the highest mental gifts then possessed, were necessary to guide the sight of primitive man to the remoter consequences of an action or of a quality. That his sight became sharper and sharper in proportion as the implement once invented showed itself to be insufficient, and became more and more differentiated in its adaptation to the different kinds of labour, follows as a matter of course. But the decisive action occurred when the anthropoid ape for the first time mechanically worked up natural objects, for by doing so he was enabled to exploit nature rationally, according to his desires and requirements, to emancipate himself from the limitations of existence as regards place and climate, to break those chains of partial action which weigh upon everything belonging to the animal world.

One must take fully into consideration the diffi-

culties under which primitive man made his first tools; but one must, however, realise still more the immeasurable advantages which proceed from the possession, and the disadvantages which arise from the want, of a tool, in order to perceive that man had a vital interest in preserving permanently by him the objects which he had produced. If in his inexperience he at first threw away his laboriously acquired treasure after using it, yet soon the oft-recurring need for it, and the trouble of remaking it, must have taught him better. And by not leaving the tool behind him for someone else, he made not only a tremendous step in advance in the satisfaction of his needs, but also took a step higher in the social scale of his tribe. The others had need of him, admired him, feared or flattered him; they perhaps sought to take his treasured tool away from him; he had therefore to defend himself against others, and all these facts formed still more strongly the desire to keep it for himself permanently and exclusively. The conception of property flashed upon the human mind. It sprang from the sweat of labour; and human culture begins not with equality but with property.

This rather lengthy digression has been necessary in order that we may be able to oppose actual facts to the logical subtlety of Proudhon, which appears to-day to have a greater power than ever of leading men astray. The question whether the producer of a stone celt was merely the user of its advantages (Latin, *possessor*) or its actual owner and master; whether he also had the right to the substances of

which it was composed, appears, after what we have said above, to be simply childish. The property, which was absolutely labour-property, was at once perceived to be such, to be *dominium* and not merely *possessio*; it never occurred to anybody either to doubt it or to believe it. Now, Proudhon declares that general consent cannot justify property, because general consent to an injustice cannot form the basis of justice. But apart from the fact that the innate sense of justice in society is merely a fiction of Proudhon's, as of all earlier or later Utopians, this proposition may perhaps belong to metaphysics or ethics, but certainly not to the empirical science of sociology. For he who puts on the crown, and whom all agree to obey, is really king, even if he has waded to the throne through seas of blood. The question, in so far as it is neither political nor a justification of his mode of action, is not a legal one but purely ethical. The answer to this question prejudices nothing either as to life or society, and history knows cases enough of actions which cannot be approved from the moral standpoint, and yet have turned out to the advantage of the community.

The opinion that agrarian communism, or the village community, is the most primitive form of property and the natural form of society, is also quite untenable. In the first place, because the word *naturally* cannot be taken in the sense that it implies an unalterable normal condition, or something fixed; for, in reality, *naturally* means that which develops itself, and therefore something

in the highest degree changeable. In the second place, because tribal communism is by no means such a primitive condition as the Socialists, from Rousseau's time downwards, seem to believe, and wish to make others believe. Rather, a state preceded it, in which only movable property, the *jus utendi atque abutendi re*, was known to man. Races have been found which possess very scanty conceptions of religion, which have not recognised the family in the widest implication of the idea; whereas, on the other hand, no race has been found to whom the idea of property was not known. Certainly in this case it was only a question of the possession of weapons and ornaments, and so forth; possession of land, especially as a communal possession, has only been found among a comparatively small number of primitive peoples, and implies a very advanced state of social culture. But, however little this condition is the natural one, *κάρ' ἐξόχην*, still less is it particularly moral or just.

We know to-day for certain that the rise of communal possession in land was always inseparably connected with the introduction of slavery, and that one cannot be thought of without the other. But to wish to imagine equality in addition to the collective possession of primitive society is to a great extent a distortion of the facts of history. Whatever facts we may produce from the actual and not merely imaginary primitive history of property would be so many arguments against Proudhon's contention. His economic argument is just as untenable, that labour should lead to equality. All

work, according to Proudhon, is the effective of a collective force, which is equal to the resultants of the forces of the single individuals who form the labour group. Consequently, the product of labour is the property of the whole community, and every worker has an equal claim to it. This is, briefly, the argument which, from premises that are possibly correct, draws conclusions that are entirely false. Proudhon gives the following example: "Two hundred grenadiers placed the obelisk of Luxor on its pedestal in a few hours, and yet we do not believe that one man could have performed the same work in two hundred days. The collective force is greater than the sum of individual forces and individual efforts. Therefore the capitalist has not rewarded the labourer fairly when he pays wages for one day multiplied by the number of day-labourers employed by him."

It will be seen that Proudhon here proceeds from the assumption that the value of a product of a labour is a firmly established and easily fixed amount, as John Grey and Rodbertus had taught before him; for only in this case could it be exactly stated how great the claim is which belongs to a labourer. In fact, the characteristic feature of Proudhon's theory of value lies in his endeavour to determine and fix values; that is, to use his own dialectic jargon, according to the synthetic solution of the antithesis of value in use and value in exchange, in which our economic life fluctuates. Supply and demand, considered by others as the factors which regulate and determine value, are to him only forms which serve

to contrast with one another the value in use and value in exchange, and to cause these values to combine. From justice, which ought to be the foundation of society, he concludes the necessity, and from general obedience of life to law the possibility, of a determination of values. Even this value, thus determined, will be a variable amount, a proportionate figure, similar to the index which in the case of chemical elements gives their combining weights. "But this value will none the less be strictly fixed. Value may alter, but the law of values is unalterable; indeed, the fact that value is capable of alteration only results from its being subject to a law whose principle is essentially fluctuating, for it is labour measured by time." (*Contradictions*, i., "On the Theory of Value.") Value is thus brought into consideration within the community which producers form among themselves by means of the division of labour and exchange, the relation of the proportion of the products which compose riches, and that which is specially termed the value of a product is a formula which assigns a proportion of this product in coins in the general wealth.

Leaving out of the question the moral arrangement of the world, which even here has contributed to this definition of double meaning, we may ask, how is this formula, which assigns in coins the proportion of the product in the general wealth, reckoned? Proudhon has always appealed only to the realisation of the idea through the actual circulation of values on the one hand, and to the law-abiding character of nature on the other. Upon the point

of "realisation" we shall have something to say later. But the law-abiding character of life is, however, just as much an algebraical expression as the "proportion of the product." Supposing both are not disputed, what follows, then? If I know the exact formula for the direction and velocity of a projectile, shall I now be able to protect myself from every bullet by merely getting out of its way? The introduction of statistical methods into the general formula for special values Proudhon has himself excluded as incorrect. The question settles itself. Society goes on of its own accord—*laissez aller, laissez faire*—everything remains in the old way. In addition to this mistake, we find that there is in Proudhon's mind great confusion with regard to the two ideas of time of labour and value of labour.

"Adam Smith takes as a measure of value sometimes the time necessary to produce a commodity and sometimes the value of labour," says Marx in his celebrated polemic against Proudhon.¹ "Ricardo discovered this error by clearly proving the difference between these two modes of measurement. Proudhon, however, goes even farther than the error of Adam Smith, by identifying two things which Smith has only brought into juxtaposition. To find the right proportion according to which the labourers should have their share in the products of their labour, or, in other words, to determine the relative value of labour, Proudhon seeks some measure for the relative value of commodities. To de-

¹ *Das Elend der Philosophie : An Answer to Proudhon's Philosophie des Elends.* Stuttgart, 1892 (German ed.).

termine the measure for the relative value of commodities he cannot invent anything better than to give us as an equivalent for a certain quantity of work, the total of the products made by it; which leaves us to suppose that the whole of society consists of nothing but labourers, who receive as wages what they themselves produce. In the second place, he maintains the equal value of the working days of different labourers as an actual fact; in a word, he seeks the measure for the relative value of commodities in order to discover the equal payment of labourers, and assumes the equality of payment as a settled fact, in order to proceed to search for the relative value of commodities."

If we turn back to the question, What is property? we find this confusion of ideas is answerable for his unsuccessful attempt to prove that labour must create equality and annihilate property. Here, too, the equality of the working days is assumed, and therefore the equality of wages is demanded. But, then, immediately this working day is changed into his work done in a day (*tâche sociale journalière*). "Let us assume," says he, "that this social day's work amounts to the cultivation or weeding or harvesting of two square decametres, and the mean average of all the time necessary for these amounts to seven hours. One labourer will finish it in six hours; another in eight hours; the majority will work seven hours; but so long as each performs the amount of work required of him, he deserves the same wages as all the others, however long he may have worked at it." Here time of work has imper-

ceptibly changed into quantity of work, and wages are given, not according to the measure of equal working times but according to the measure of equal performances. Proudhon here seeks for a solution by saying that the more capable workman, who performs his day's work in six hours, should never have the right to usurp the day's work of a less capable labourer, under the pretext of greater strength and activity, and thus rob him of work and bread; it is advantage enough derived from his greater capacities that, by this shortening of his time of labour, he has greater opportunity to work for his own personal education and culture, or to enjoy himself, and so on. But Proudhon must be driven even from this last corner of refuge by the question, What will take place if anyone will perform only the half of his day's work? Proudhon says: "That is all right; obviously half of his wages are sufficient for that man. What has he to complain of if he is rewarded according to the work which he has performed? and what does it matter to others? In this sense it is right and proper to apply the text, 'to each according to his work'; that is the law of equality."¹

But this is to retract all along the line. Proudhon, who assumes the equality of all working days, and has made it the basis of his theory of value, must now admit the dependence of wages upon the performance of work, and admit also, although reluctantly, the statement of St. Simon, "to each according to his work," which he had set out to

¹ *Qu'est-ce que la Propriété?* p. 102.

refute. He ought to have gone still farther and said: "If anyone will not do any work, what happens then? Obviously the man needs no wages; why should the others then trouble about it?—it is the law of equality." But what becomes then of the equality to which work was said to lead? Further, what about the impossibility of proving the right of property through work? All Proudhon's arguments in proof of the impossibility of property are mere dialectic sword-play which hardly anyone takes seriously. Proudhon does not even criticise actual circumstances, but proves that, following his ideal assumptions (which in any case exclude property), property is impossible.

The supposed result of his book he sums up in the Hegelian formula: "Communism, the first form and the final destiny of society, is the first terminus of social development, the thesis; property, the contradictory opposite to communism, forms the second terminus, the antithesis; it remains for us to determine the third terminus, the synthesis, and then we have the required solution. The synthesis results necessarily from the correction of the thesis by the antithesis. It is therefore necessary to examine closely its peculiarities, and to exclude that which there is in them hostile to society. The two that remain will, when united, form the true formula of human social life."¹

Karl Marx, who made very merry over Proudhon's dialectic, thought he had played his trump card against the capitalistic method of production

¹ *Qu'est-ce que la Propriété?* p. 202.

in almost the same way, namely, with the Hegelian proposition of the negation of negation. If they both explained themselves by bringing forward, besides the dialectic proof, also an historical and economic one for their contentions, the answer is that historic proof cannot be brought forward for Proudhon's synthetic conception of property or for Marx's method of production, since history only concerns itself with the past or the present; whereas such conditions as they imagine exist only in the future, and can only be derived from the past or present conditions by the dialectic method, and only can be assumed as hypotheses.

This standpoint unites Proudhon and Karl Marx, the Anarchists and the Social Democrats; they both call each other Utopians, and both are right.

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Proudhon in his book upon property did not answer the question put in its title, *What is Property?* as he had promised in the introduction. From his statement "property is theft," which was uttered with so much *éclat*, and of which, according to his own account at least, he was prouder than if he had possessed all the millions of Rothschild—from this paradox one might conclude, and certainly the great majority of his readers do conclude usually that Proudhon was an enemy of property in general. That is not at all the case. "What I have been seeking since 1840 in defining property," said he much later (in *Justice*, i., p. 302), "and what I wish to-day, as I have repeated over and over again, is

certainly not abolition of property. For this would be to fall into Communism with Plato, Rousseau, Louis Blanc, and other opponents of property, against whom I protest with all my strength. What I demand from property is *a balance*." But all his life Proudhon was unable to dispel the misunderstanding which he carelessly brought upon his doctrine in his first writing by a talented paradox. We say carelessly, for the concluding answer which Proudhon gives to the question, "What is property?" was, even in his first work, not "property is theft" but "property is liberty;" only the use of all his great scientific apparatus was quite superfluous, because it was in no way connected with the chief purpose of his book. Proudhon might just as well have placed the supposed conclusion, the Ten Commandments of his economic doctrine, at the beginning of his book, for they were arrived at not by the method of science but of speculation. These Ten Commandments run:

(1) Individual possession is the fundamental condition of social life; five thousand years of the history of property prove it; property is the suicide of society. Possession is a right; property is against all right; suppress property and maintain possession, and you would by this one main alteration transform everything—laws, government, economy, statesmanship; you would make evil disappear from the earth.

(2) Since the right of occupation is the same for all, possession changes according to the number of possessors; thus property can no longer be created.

(3) Since the result of labour remains the same for the whole of the community, property, which arising from the exploitation of others and from rent, disappears.

(4) Since every human work necessarily arises from a collective force, every piece of property becomes both collective and indivisible—to be exact, labour annihilates property.

(5) Since every capacity for any occupation, including all the instruments of labour and capital, is collective property, the inequality of treatment and of goods, which rests upon the inequality of capabilities, is injustice and theft.

(6) Trade necessarily presupposes the freedom of the contracting parties and the equivalence of the products exchanged; but since value is determined by the amount of time and expense which each product costs, and since freedom is inviolable, the workers remain necessarily equal in reward as also in rights and duties.

(7) Products are only exchanged again for products; but since every bargain presupposes the equality of products, profit is impossible and unjust. Take heed to this, the first and the most elementary principle of economics, and pauperism, luxury, servitude, vice, crime, and hunger will disappear from our midst.

(8) Men are already, before they fully agreed to do so, associated from the physical and mathematical law of production; the equality of external conditions of existence is thus a demand of the justice of social right, of strict right; friendship, respect,

admiration, and recognition alone enter into the province of equity or proportion.

(9) Free association, or freedom which limits itself to expressing equality in the means of production and equivalence in articles of exchange, is the only possible, the only right, and the only true form of society.

(10) Politics is the science of freedom; the government of men by men, under whatever name it may be concealed, is servitude; the highest consummation of society is found in the union of order and anarchy.

We will only select from this Decalogue of Collectivist Anarchism one dogma, the seventh; because it contains a fundamental error of Proudhon's, which must continually produce other errors. "Products," he says, "are only exchanged for products; but since every bargain presupposes the equality of products, profit is impossible and not right." By this proposition the question of pauperism and everything evil is to be solved, and, in fact, Proudhon even made some attempts to realise the theory contained therein. But that every bargain presupposes the equality of products in any other than the sense determined by supply and demand, is untrue; yet even this equality is not regarded by Proudhon as such. He understands thereby equivalence or the equality of values, which again is determined by the time of labour, and accordingly he makes it a presupposition of a free bargain that only products which represent equal times of labour can be exchanged. Thus a hat which took six hours to

make, should be exchanged for a poem which was written in the same time. And if we are startled by the incorrectness of this assumption, what can be said for the converse of this statement, namely, that products of equal value, *i. e.*, such as represent equal times of labour, must be accepted at any time in place of payment, just as money is accepted to-day? Proudhon ascribed the utility of money-as a universal medium of exchange to the supposed circumstance that its value was fixed or established, and concluded therefrom that whenever the value of other commodities was determined, they would have the same utility as money; thus, that it would be possible to exchange at any time a watch which represented three days' work for a pair of boots which had been made in the same time. And to complete this economic and logical confusion, Proudhon once again inverts history, and makes the just and free exchange of products and the circulation of values the starting-point for the determination of values, and thereby also the foundation of his realm of justice, freedom, and equality, in which economic forces have free play.

If values circulate themselves, then too they determine themselves, and thus only is there a just bargain; profit is impossible, so too is the accumulation of capital and property. Since all have equal share in production as in consumption, commodities will always be where they are needed, and they will always be needed where they exist; supply and demand will equal one another, value in use and value in exchange will be the same, value is deter-

mined, and the circle (which is in any case a vicious circle) is completed. Land, like all the means of labour, is a collective possession. Every one will enjoy the full results of his labour, but no one will be able to heap up riches because profit in any form is impossible. Men will collect through their own free choice in productive groups, which again will be in direct intercourse one with another, and will exchange their products as may be required, without profit. Common interests will be determined by Boards of Experts, who will be chosen by the members of these groups by means of universal suffrage. The total of all these boards, which are completely autonomous, forms the only existing and only possible administration. Governments become superfluous, since the economic life must entirely absorb political life. And since there will be no property and no distinction of rich and poor, there will also be no rule of one man over another, there will be no criminals, judicial and civil power, militarism and bureaucracy become superfluous and disappear of themselves. In spite of anarchy (*i. e.*, no government), or rather because of it, the greatest, the only order will prevail.

In fact, if anything ever deserved the name ideal it is this reform of society sketched by Proudhon, to which he himself has given the name "Mutualism." He did not suspect or notice that he had done nothing more than express the abstract formula of existing relationships, the most general conception of the liberal scheme of economics. Things happen in our own world just as Proudhon wished in his

kingdom of the future, only there are a few insignificant factors of friction, extensions of co-efficients, and so on, which he, if he had been familiar with scientific methods, would have added as "corrections" to his universal formula. The present world is related to his as any one triangle is to the triangle absolute. The triangle which is neither obtuse-angled, nor acute-angled, nor right-angled, neither equilateral nor isosceles, nor of unequal sides, whose sides and angles are not confined to any particular measurement, may certainly be a real triangle and contain no contradiction in itself (which is by no means the case in Proudhon's realm of justice), but this triangle cannot be drawn or even imagined. This is the old dispute of nominalists and realists, a piece of scholasticism long since obsolete applied to the problems of modern society, and not even worth refutation, least of all worthy of any man who has once correctly recognised the reality of human society, and made it the guiding motive of his thought.

On two occasions Proudhon seemed to have the alluring opportunity of being able to realise his Utopian visions. The first was in the time of the Revolution. In February, 1849, he founded the People's Bank (*Banque du Peuple*),¹ which was to take the initiative in free economic organisation,

¹ After Proudhon's paper, *Le Représentant du Peuple*, had published the statutes of the Exchange Bank, he tried in numerous articles to explain the mechanism and necessity of it. These articles have been collected in a book, and appeared under the title, *Résumé de la Question Sociale, Banque d'Échange*.

and, according to Proudhon's expectations, would have introduced "free society" if, at the decisive moment, he had not been sent for three years to the prison of Saint Pélagie for a political offence, and the Bank was therefore compelled to liquidate. The second opportunity occurred in the year 1855. Napoleon had asked for opinions as to how the *Palais de l'Industrie*, in which the Paris Exhibition had been held, could be used after its close as an institution of public utility. Among those to whom this question was addressed we find Proudhon, who answered it with the project of a permanent exhibition,¹ which was to be conducted by a society proceeding from very much the same point of view as the People's Bank. This project was, of course, left unnoticed, and Proudhon became deeply disgusted and discouraged at this new disappointment.

The People's Bank, like its subsequent second edition, the Permanent Exhibition Company, was to be founded (in Proudhon's Hegelian method of expression) upon the identity of the shareholders and their clients. The producers who had a share in the People's Bank were to deliver their products to the bank, which would control and determine the prices of those commodities by assessors, the prices being determined only with reference to the time of labour spent upon them and the necessary expenses of production; profit was forbidden since the bank was not to operate upon its own account. The producer received upon delivery of his goods "exchange bonds," in return for which he then could

¹The scheme appeared in Proudhon's posthumous works.

take from the bank other commodities. As the bank also granted its customers loans without charging interest, money and interest would become unnecessary, trade would gradually be carried on only by means of the bonds of the bank, and thus would be brought about the harmony of social intercourse of which Proudhon dreamed.

The Permanent Exhibition Company was to be a new edition of the People's Bank, perfected and enlarged in every direction. Since the shareholders of this company consisted of producers, and their purpose was above all the sale and interchange of products, so therefore the subscription for the formation of the capital was not to be, as in the case of other companies, merely in money, but was to be nine-tenths in products, which were to be sold by the company, and the receipts of the sale were then to be credited to the shareholders. As the State was to become surety for the interest on these shares, Proudhon thought that these must become actual money, representing rights to dividend, which could only lose their value by the destruction of the company's depot for goods. Against the goods which were deposited with it or the sale of which it undertook, as well as against the bills which were given to it to discount, the company was to issue, together with the cash which it had at disposal, general bonds of exchange (*la bons généraux d'échange*) which would represent the goods stored in it and realised by it, and should give the claim to an equal value in goods which the holder of the bond could take from the storehouses as he

wished. These bonds were to be the circulating money of the company, and were to be accepted by it instead of cash payments in all transactions with goods or with bills. The circulating paper of the company, held by it at par, owing to the fact that it could be exchanged into money or the goods of the company upon presentation, would become the great lever of its operations and the irresistible instrument of its power. The company was to undertake banking and commission business of all kinds, grant credit in money and goods, and support industry, trade, and agriculture.

All objects deposited with this society, including gold and silver, and especially all articles composing its balance, were to be arranged in an exchange tariff, which would be continually changeable, and the object of which was to secure the equivalence of values. "Certainly every rise in the exchange of an article would be balanced by an equivalent fall of exchange in one or more articles, if one regards the existing total sum, one-tenth being allowed in fluctuations either up or down. The differences in time in the balance would be entered in a special balance book which would finally equalise itself from time to time."

That is the project; and its author gives the following example: Since the company carries on no business on its own account, and neither acquires nor possesses products itself, and thus does not lose money on the rise or fall, it is only guided in directing the course of prices by one object, viz., to moderate one by the other, and to create a per-

manent and a daily compensation; thus, if demand arises for one product while it falls off for one or several others, the company raises the price of the first 4 per cent., and at the same time lowers, according to the quantity of the first, the price of the other in such a way that the compensation is as exact as possible. Because it is difficult to reach this mathematical exactitude, a certain margin is allowed, which again, compensating itself from time to time, never can amount to the assets of the society. If we assume, for the sake of example, that the price of gold has fallen—that is, that gold is freely offered, while silver has risen, that is, is more in demand—the company, since its bills are discounted with its own notes, will give 100 francs of its money for 105 francs of gold, equal to 100 francs in silver; or, to express myself more exactly, for a weight of gold which is only one-twentieth higher than five twenty-five franc pieces, and the weight of silver which is only one-twentieth lower than twenty-five franc pieces. From this compensation no profit accrues to the company; it has only intervened with its own money in order again to re-establish equilibrium.

From this process of compensation carried on by the company, which was to be applied in like manner to all products, raw materials and food stuffs, and so on, Proudhon hoped for that much talked of and much promising fixity of values, since all products would (so to speak) be monetised and made into money, and would maintain the highest degree of circulating power. Branches of the company

over all France and a complete public administration were to complete the system, which should have as its object the organisation and centralisation of exchange of products in return for products, according to the formulæ of J. B. Say, with as little money as possible, as few intermediaries as possible, with the least possible expense, and for the exclusive benefit of producers and consumers.

It hardly need be observed that the rise and prosperity of these institutions must stand or fall by the correctness of the assumption of fixed values and of the monetisation of all products. Proudhon's opponents wished to make out, that in view of this knowledge his sudden arrest and imprisonment in Saint Pélagie, by which he was divested of all responsibility for the liquidation of the company, was not altogether unwished for by him. But this is contradicted by the attempt which was renewed later on to realise the project of the People's Bank. We have, indeed, no cause to suspect Proudhon's good faith in the matter; on the other hand, the supposed originality of this idea of his is all the more open to suspicion, because in all essential particulars it reminds us too closely of the "labour paper money" of Rodbertus that was to be issued by the State after the determination of values, an idea with which Proudhon's economics had many points in common. There is a still greater similarity between Proudhon's projects and the Boards of Trade thought of by Bray ten years before the beginning of the People's Bank; and it is also like John Gray's Central Bank.

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In later years Proudhon not only outwardly, owing either to compulsion or prudence, renounced all immediate realisation of his intentions, but even became convinced and expressed his conviction in his work upon the federative principle (*Du Principe Fédératif*, 1852), that ordered anarchy was an ideal, and as such could never be realised, but that nevertheless human society should strive to attain it by means of federative organisations, as he had sketched it in his earlier writings. Even in this period of mental maturity, when removed from political agitation, he remained the sworn enemy and direct opponent of the Communists, and wished to see the great problem of the best arrangement of society solved, not by universal levelling down, but by the general perfection and development of society; not by revolution from which he had gained nothing but disgust and disillusionment, but by evolution. "If ideas will rise up," he used to say, "then even the paving stones would rise up themselves if the Government were so imprudent as to wait for this."

With true prophetic insight Proudhon perceived the fact that even in human society revolution is everything; with a clearness of vision such as none before him, and only very few after him, have possessed, he always insisted upon the organic character of human society and the natural continuity between animal and human social life; and in this lies his greatness, which will never be diminished by any of his numerous errors. But while he thus with one foot for the first time trod upon the ground of a new discovery, with the other he stood on the

standpoint of social philosophy of previous centuries. He could neither externally nor internally disassociate himself from its baseless assumptions of a social contract, the absolute rights of man, a moral order of the universe, and similar ethical views of politics ; and herein lies the contradiction upon which his great mental talents were shipwrecked. If we once regard human society as Proudhon did, as something real, the product of nature which is moved and develops itself according to the laws of the rest of nature, then we have once for all given up the right to mark out for it a line of development determined merely by speculation, or to demand from it that it should move towards any particular goal, however well-intentioned it may be. A breeder may produce in his pigeons or fowls a certain kind of feather or a certain form of pouting, but he cannot change the pigeon into a hen. The artificial selection of breeding is all that man can do (*pour corriger la nature*) against the free progress of natural development. This is not so insignificant as one may be inclined to believe at the first glance. The latter belongs to the category of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and of that Utopian social philosophy which began with Plato, and in all human probability will not end for a long time. Proudhon wished to unite both, one with another,—to unite water with fire. Like all Utopians, he desired—he who all his life, in his numerous writings, so frequently confuted and sneered at them—that the human race might be metamorphosed in order to accept unanimously his ideas about society. For that the

men of his day were not fit for a true democracy—that is, for anarchy—he was honest enough to admit.

“Nothing is in reality less democratic than the people,” said he, occasionally, and he did not allow himself the least delusion as regards their slavish love for authority. For that very reason, he thought democracy must be changed into “demopædy,” and a complete revolution of a popular spirit must be caused by education. But to prove that, even with the help of democracy, people would not be ripe for pure democracy, or, rightly speaking, for anarchy, we can quote an authority which he never doubted, namely, himself. In an access of pessimism, he said once, “I have thought I have noticed (may philosophy pardon me for it!) that the more reason develops in us the more brutal becomes passion when once it is let loose. It appears then that the angel and the biped brute which together compose our human nature in their intimate union, instead of mingling their attributes, only live side by side with one another. If progress leads us to that, of what use is it?” This is a bad look-out for the great moral revolution upon which Proudhon more and more based all his hopes.

Proudhon has had the most varied judgment passed upon him. Some have treated him as an obscure pamphlet writer. Louis Blanc calls him a prizefighter; Laveleye, in a history of Socialism, only considers him worth mentioning in order to call his ideas “the dreams of a raving idiot”; Karl Marx denies him either talent or knowledge; many have considered him as a Jesuitical hypocrite; others,

again, his followers and representatives, have called him the greatest man of the century. Ludwig Pfau called him the clearest thinker that France had produced since Descartes. But the spectacle is by no means new. In reality, but little courage and wit are to-day needed to acquire the applause of an ignorant multitude which has no idea of Proudhon's train of thought by the condemnation of the father of Anarchism. "Justice must be done to all, even to Louis Napoleon," exclaimed Proudhon, to the great astonishment *orbis et urbis* after the *coup d'état*; and not to take a lower standard than the father of Anarchism, we exclaim also, "Justice must be done to all, even to Proudhon."

The most usual reproach which is cast against Proudhon is that he is contradictory and confused. This reproof is generally made by people who know no more about Proudhon than the paradox "Property is Theft," and from this one expression call him confused and contradictory.

Proudhon saw very clearly the end before his eyes, strove to attain it unfalteringly and steadily, and amid all the variety of the developments in which he preached his ideas to the world for a quarter of a century, never betrayed one iota of its contents. The contradiction from which his work suffered lay deeper. It lay in the form of his thought, and partly in the period to which he belonged. Placed on the boundary line between two epochs of social science and of social forms, one of which is marked by dogma and the other by induction, he had not the strength to break completely

with one or give himself up completely to the other. His whole life and thought was a constant fight against dogma in every form. He fought against social Utopianism as against religious dogmatism, and fought against the dogmatism of property as against political authority; he sought to transform Socialism upon severely scientific and realistic lines, and to free it from all the fetters of dogmatic religion; and yet, just as Rousseau did, he placed at the head of his system a dogma: "Man is born free"; and at the conclusion of it the teleological phrase of a moral order of society—two propositions which can never be proved by experience, but rather contradict all experience.

In the same way this internal contradiction is shown in the principal work of his last period, the *Justice dans la Révolution et dans l'Église*, in which Proudhon endeavours to show these two separate worlds in their marked difference one from another without suspecting that he himself fluctuated between both.

After he, as a logical idealist, had denied all external force and all authority, and nevertheless as a realist had supported society as the unalterable condition of human life and civilisation, he seeks at the same time to save anarchy and society by a new bond between individuals who have been set free and find this in some internal necessity and internal authority, in a principle which acts upon the will like a force, and determines it in the direction of the general interest independently of all consideration of self-interest.

And so the man, who had put away from himself everything of an absolute and *a priori* nature because he declared a purely empirical foundation of social science to be the source of all immorality, arrived at the assumption of an innate, immanent justice as the first principle of society which he, with the arbitrariness of a catechism writer, declared to be "the first and most essential of our faculties; a sovereign faculty which, by that very fact, is the most difficult to know, the faculty of feeling and affirming our dignity, and consequently of wishing it and defending it as well in the person of others as in our own person."

As Proudhon, in spite of the fact that he was always opposing Utopianism, nevertheless fell into the chief error of the Utopians, so, too, finally he shared the destiny of Auguste Comte, upon whom during his life he had rather looked down. Both had started with a sworn antagonism to every speculative foundation of social philosophy, and both finally adopted a *deus ex machina* in order to preserve the world that was falling into individual pieces before them from a complete atomisation. With Comte it is called "love," with Proudhon "justice." The distinction between the two is somewhat childish. Both perceived the standpoint of evolution, the mechanical conception which overcomes all deviations, without assigning to it the part which it deserves. One may safely say that if Proudhon had been brought into connection with the doctrine of evolution, he would have been one of the leading sociologists. He had an infinitely keen

sense of the most secret motions of the social soul, but he believed that he might not approach it lovingly in its nudity of nature, and therefore degraded it to a Platonic idea, after having affirmed its utmost reality. This was an action like that of Kronos, the curse of which never departed from his thought.

To this was added a very scanty and transitory acquaintance with political economy which allowed the practicability of his ideas to appear to him in the easiest light, but which, when he was opposed to one so thoroughly acquainted with it as Karl Marx, placed him in the most piteous position.

One of the commonest reproaches which is made against Proudhon, and which is partly a personal one, refers to his attitude towards Napoleon III. In the little political catechism which is found in his *Justice*, Proudhon answered the question "Whether Anarchy can be united with the dynastic principle," in the following way: "It is clear that France till now was not of opinion that freedom and dynasty were incompatible ideas. When the old monarchy called together the States General it kindled the Revolution. The constitution of 1791 and those of 1814 and 1830, proved the desire of the country to reconcile a monarchical principle with the democracy. The popularity of the First Empire was one argument more for the possibility of this supposition; the people believed they found in it all their preconceived ideas, and apparently surrender was reconciled with progress. Thus men satisfied their habits of subjection under a lordship, and their need

for unity; they exercised the danger of a president dictator or an oligarchy. When in 1830 Lafayette defined the new order of affairs as 'a monarchy surrounded by republican arrangements,' he perceived the identity of the political and economic order. While the true republic consists in the equilibrium of forces and efforts, people pleased themselves by seeing a new dynasty hold the balance and guaranteeing justice. And finally, this theory is confirmed by the example of England (although equality is unknown there), and by the new constitutional states. No doubt the union of the dynastic principle with that of freedom and equality in France has not produced the fruits that were expected from it, but that was the fault of Governmental fatalism; the mistake was made just as much by the princes as by the people. Although dynastic parties since 1848 have shown themselves by no means friendly to revolution, the force of circumstances will again bring them to it, and as France at all stages of her fortunes has always liked to give herself a ruler and to manifest her unity by a symbol, so it would be exaggeration to deny even now the possibility of a restoration of the dynasty. We have heard Republicans say, 'He will be my master who shall wear the purple robe of equality,' and those who speak thus form neither the smallest nor the least intelligent portion; but it is also true that they did not wish for a dictatorship. At any rate, one must admit that there are no symptoms of a restoration in the near future. And what makes us suppose that the dynastic principle

is, at least, under a cloud, is the fact that the pretenders and their advisers have no heart for the affair. 'After you, gentlemen,' they appear to say to the Democrats. But after the democracy there will not remain much for a dynasty to pick up, or the economic equilibrium would be false. *Non datur regnum aut imperium in æconomia.*"

This certainly reasonable and moderate point of view, which proceeds from the perception that in an organic society the caprice of one individual cannot possibly stop or disturb the course of the social function, and that king or emperor accordingly could at most be a symbol, is also at the bottom of the book on social revolution. In the *coup d'état* of the 2d of December, Proudhon only saw a stage of the great social revolution, the manifestation of the will of the people, striving in the direction of social equalisation; although perhaps mistakenly, and challenged Louis Napoleon, whose *coup d'état* he had prophesied, condemned, and sought to prevent, to show himself worthy of public opinion, and to use the mandate given him by destiny and by the French people in the sense that it was entrusted to him.¹ Proudhon probably did not believe, when he was writing the *Sociale Révolution*, by any means too much in the willingness of Napoleon to take upon himself such a mission as he assigned to him. The

¹ It must not be forgotten that the people expected in Louis Napoleon "the social emperor," and that he had in earlier times played upon this expectation. Compare his work on *The Abolition of Pauperism*, German translation by R. V. Richard. Leipsic, 1857. Volume ii.

language of the book is in any case very reserved, and there is no trace of the apotheosis of the author of the *coup d'état*.

Nevertheless some have wished to represent this as Proudhon's intention; his early release from the prison in which the little book was written as the immediate effect, and as being the thanks of the Emperor, thus representing Proudhon as a mercenary time-server. But this is not in accordance with the facts. Proudhon remained in his imprisonment almost till the very last day of his sentence, and the attitude of the authorities towards his writings afterwards does not seem to show that any relationship, even a secret one, existed between Proudhon and Napoleon. Proudhon might write what he liked, it was confiscated; in vain he applied for permission to be allowed to issue his paper, *Justice*; a book which no longer showed the violence of his youth brought him three more years' imprisonment again, which he only escaped by a rapid flight to Belgium, and in the general amnesty of the year 1859 he was specially excepted from its conditions. When the Emperor in 1861, as a special favour, granted him permission to return home before the proper time, Proudhon proudly refused this favour, much as he wished to be in Paris, and only returned there at the expiration of the three years' period, at the end of 1863. These, at least, are no proofs that the author of *What is Property?* allowed himself to be brought over by the man on the 2d December. But Proudhon was not to breathe the air of his native land much longer. Broken by the troubles of persecu-

tion, he died, after a long illness, on the 19th June, 1865, in the arms of his wife, who, like himself, belonged to the working classes, and with whom he had led a life full of harmony and love.

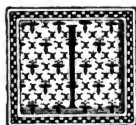




CHAPTER III

MAX STIRNER AND THE GERMAN FOLLOWERS OF PROUDHON

Germany in 1830-40 and France—Stirner and Proudhon—Biography of Stirner—*The Individual and his Property* (*Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*)—The Union of Egoists—The Philosophic Contradiction of the *Einziger*—Stirner's Practical Error—Julius Faucher—Moses Hess—Karl Grün—Wilhelm Marr.



IN the first half of the forties, almost about the same time, but completely independent one from another, there appeared, on each side of the Rhine, two men who preached a new revolution in a manner totally different from the ordinary revolutionist, and one from which at that time even the most courageous hearts and firmest minds shrank back. Both were followers of the "royal Prussian Court philosopher" Hegel, and yet took an entirely different direction one from the other: but both met again at the end of their journey in their unanimous renunciation of all political and economic doctrines hitherto held; in their thorough opposition to every existing and imagined organisation of society upon

whatever compulsion of right it might be founded; and in their desire for free organisation upon the simple foundation of rules made by convention or agreement—in their common desire for Anarchy.

The contemporaneous appearance of Proudhon and Stirner is of as much importance as their, in many ways, fundamental difference. The first circumstance shows their appearance was symptomatic, and raises it above any supposed or probable outcome of chance; Stirner and Proudhon support each other mutually with all their independence, and with all their difference one from another. As to this, it cannot be denied that it is to be traced, first and foremost, to the totally different environment in which the two authors grew up.

Ludwig Pfau, in a talented essay, has sought to derive the literary peculiarities of Proudhon from the Gallic character and from his French *milieu*. But even besides the purely literary aspect, Proudhon shows all the gifts and all the weaknesses of his people and of his time; he shares with all Frenchmen their small inclination to real criticism, but also their faculty of never separating themselves from the stream of practical life; and thus, before everything, we perceive in Proudhon's earlier works a strong tendency towards the part of an agitator. L. Pfau asserts that it is a specific peculiarity of the French nation, with all their notorious sentiment for freedom, "to discipline their own reluctant personality, and subject it to the common interest"; and therein lies, perhaps, the reason why Proudhon, although an enthusiastic advocate of personal

freedom, never wished this to be driven to the point of the disintegration of collective unity and to the sacrifice of the idea of society.

Stirner is the German thinker who is carried away by the unchecked flow of his thoughts far from the path of the actual life into a misty region of "Cloud-cuckoo-land," where he actually remains as the "only individual," because no one can follow him. There is no trace in Stirner's book of any intention of being an agitator. As far as political parties are mentioned in it, they do appear as such, but merely as corollaries of certain tendencies of philosophic thought. Stirner keeps himself even anxiously apart from politics, and a certain dislike to them is unmistakable in him. All parties have in his eyes only this in common, that they all strive to actualise conceptions and ideas which lie beyond them, whether these be called God, State, or humanity. Stirner stands in the same relation to the philosophic tendencies of his own and earlier times. He sees them all run into the great ocean of generality the absolute, nothingness. The distinction between Saint Augustine and L. Feuerbach is for him purely a superficial and not an essential one; for the "man" of the latter is as foreign to him as the "God" of the former. And so Stirner carries his disinclination to politics, as being inimical to the philosophy of his time, almost to disgust, being herein a genuine son of his country and of his period.

Upon the philosophic exaltation and the speculative "foundation period" of the beginning of the century there had followed a severe depression; to

the over-eager expectations which had been placed in philosophy there followed just as severe a disappointment; to the metaphysical orgy there followed a moral headache, which might be designated not inaptly by the motto which Schopenhauer gave in mockery to Feuerbach's philosophy, so well suited to his time—

“ Edite, bibite, collegiales !
Post multa sæcula
Pocula nulla.”

The political attitude of the forties was very much the same. The national enthusiasm, the wars of freedom, and the sanguine hopes which had attended the downfall of the Corsican, had, like the expectations aroused by the Revolutionists of the days of July, ended in miserable disaster. The touching confidence which a nation, all too naïve in politics, had placed in its princes had been shamefully deceived and abused. All dreams of union and freedom seemed to be extinguished for a long time, and the flunkeyism which was unfortunately only too rampant in the nation, ran riot, while frank souls stood aside in disgust. The more eager the spiritual enthusiasm had been on the threshold of two centuries, the deeper now did apathy weigh upon men's spirits in the period of the forties. The fuller men's souls had been of surging and stormy ideals, and wishings and vague longings of all kinds, the emptier did they now become, and not only Stirner could with justice give to his “ only individual ” the motto, “ I have placed my all on nothing,” but it

was the motto of all Germany at that time. And yet in one thing Stirner is the type of his people as contrasted with Proudhon. He is the most complete example of the German who lacks that proud self-sacrificing view of the life of the community, that feeling of the inseparability of the individual from the mass of his people—which is the token of the French,—but who at all times has suffered from a separatism that destroys everything. He is the typical representative of that nation to whom its best sons have denied the capacity of being a nation, but which has therefore been able to produce more striking individualities than all other civilised nations of the time.

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Caspar Schmidt—for this is Stirner's real name¹—was born at Baireuth on the 25th October, 1806, and, like Strauss, Feuerbach, Bruno Bauer, and other thinkers of the same kind, devoted his time to theological and philosophic studies. After completing these, he took the modest position of a teacher in a high school, and in a girls' school in Berlin. In 1844 there appeared, under the pseudonym "Max Stirner," a book called *The Individual*

¹ Stirner's chief work, *The Individual and his Property* (*Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*, Leipsic, 1845), has been reprinted by P. Reclam, at Leipsic, with a good introduction by Paul Lauterbach. The literature about Stirner is almost exclusively confined to a few scattered remarks in larger works, which are not always very appropriate. J. H. Mackay is said to be working at a biography of Stirner. The monograph by Robert Schellwien, *Max Stirner und Friedrich Nietzsche* (Leipsic, 1892), is quite worthless for our purpose.

and his Property, with the dedication which, under these circumstances, is touching: "To my Darling, Marie Döhnhardt." The book appeared like a meteor; it caused for a short time a great deal of talk, and then sank into oblivion for ten years, till the growing stream of Anarchist thought again came back to it in more recent times. *A History of the Reaction*, written after the year 1848, is esteemed as a good piece of historical work; and, besides this, Caspar Schmidt also produced translations of Say, Adam Smith, and other English economists. On the 26th of June, 1856, he ended his life, poor in external circumstances, rich in want and bitterness. That is all that we know of the personality of the man who has raised the idea of personality to a Titanic growth that has oppressed the world.

Stirner proceeds from the fact, the validity of which we have placed in the right light at the beginning of this book, that the development of mankind and of human society has hitherto proceeded in a decidedly individualistic direction, and has consisted predominantly in the gradual emancipation of the individual from his subjection to general ideas and their corresponding correlatives in actual life, in the return of the Ego to itself. Starting from the school of Fichte and Hegel, he pursued this special individualistic tendency till close upon the limits of caricature; he formally founded a cultus of the Ego, all the while being anxious that it should not return again to the region of metaphysical soap-bubbles, and leave its psychological and practical sphere. On the contrary, Stirner appears to be rather inclined

to Positivism, and to consider the details of life and of perception as real, and as the only ones whose existence is justified. All that is comprehensible and general is secondary, a product of the individual, the subject turned into an object, a creation that is looked upon and honoured by the creator as the only actual reality, the highest end—indeed, as something sacred. In the origin of this generalisation, as well as in emancipation from it, Stirner perceives the course of progressive culture.

The ancients only got so far as generalisations of the lower order; they lived in the feeling that the world and worldly relationships (for example, the natural bond of blood) were the only true things before which their powerless self must bow down. Man, in the view of life taken by the ancient world, lived entirely in the region of perception, and therefore all his general ideas, even the highest type of them, not excluding Plato's, retained a strongly sensuous character.

Christianity only went a step higher with its generalisations out of the region of the senses; ideas became more spiritual and less corporeal in proportion as they became more general. Antiquity sought the true pleasure of life, enjoyment of life; Christianity sought the true life; antiquity sought complete sensuousness, Christianity complete morality and spirituality; the first a happy life here, the latter a happy life hereafter; antiquity postulated as the highest moral basis, the State, the laws of the world; Christianity postulated God, imperishable, everlasting Law. The ancient world did not get be-

yond the rule of formal reason, the Sophists; Christianity put the heart in the place of reason, and cultivation of sentiment in that of one-sided cultivation of the intellect. Nevertheless, this is, according to Stirner (as has already been mentioned), the same process, the objectivisation of the Self, which comes out of itself, and considers itself as some foreign body striving upwards—unconscious self-deification.

Even in the Reformation Stirner recognises nothing more than the continuation of the same process. Up to the time of the period preceding the Reformation, reason, that was condemned as heathenish, lay under the dominion of dogma; shortly before the Reformation, however, it was said, "If only the heart remains Christianly minded, reason may after all have its way." But the Reformation at last places the heart in a more serious position, and since then hearts have become visibly less Christian. When men began with Luther "to take the matter to heart," this step of the Reformation led to the heart being lightened from the heavy burden of Christianity. The heart becomes from day to day less Christian; it loses the contents with which it occupies itself, until at last nothing remains to it but empty "heartiness," general love of man, the love of humanity, the consciousness of freedom. It need hardly be mentioned that this view of history is quite arbitrary and distorted. Who requires to be told that the Reformation was, perhaps, the greatest historical act in favour of the individual, because it freed him from the most powerful of all

authorities, from the omnipotence of the Roman dogma? With the Reformation the conscious movement for freedom received its first great impulse.

But Stirner places the reverence of the ancients for the State, the reverence of the Christian for God, and of modern times for humanity and freedom, all upon the same level,—they all seem to him ghosts, spectres, possession by spirits and hauntings,—and he seeks to establish the same conclusion as regards the ideas of truth, right, morality, property, and love,—the so-called sacred foundations of human society. They are all ghost-imaginings of our own mind, creations of our own Ego, before which the creator of them bows in the impotence of ignorance, considering them as something unalterable, eternal, and sacred, to which every activity of the creative idea is placed in contrast as Egoism.

“ Men have got something into their heads which they think ought to be actualised. They have ideas of love, goodness, and so on, which they would like to see realised; and therefore they wish for a kingdom of love upon earth in which no one acts out of self-interest, but everyone from love. Love shall rule. But what they have placed in their heads, how can it be called other than ‘ a fixed idea ’ (*idée fixe*)? Their heads are haunted by spectres. The most persistently haunting spectre is Man himself. Remember the proverb, ‘ The way to ruin is paved with good intentions.’ The proposal to actualise humanity in itself, to become wholly human, is of just the same disastrous character, and to it belong

the intentions of becoming good, noble, loving, and so forth."

The dominion of the idea, whether it is religious or humanitarian or moral, is for Stirner mere priestcraft; philanthropy is merely a heavenly, spiritual, but priest-imagined love. Man must be restored, and in doing so we poor wretches have ruined ourselves. It is the same ecclesiastic principle as that celebrated motto, *Fiat justitia, pereat mundus*; humanity and justice are ideas and ghosts to which everything is sacrificed. The enthusiast for humanity leaves out of consideration persons as far as his enthusiasm extends, and walks in a vague ideal of sacred interest. Humanity is not a person but an ideal—an imagination.

All progress of public opinion or emancipation of the human mind, as hitherto proceeding, is accordingly for Stirner worthless labour, a mere scene-shifting. As Christianity not only did not free mankind from the power of ancient spectres, but rather strengthened and increased them, so too the Reformation did not remove the chains of mankind a hair's-breadth. "Because Protestantism broke down the medieval hierarchy, the opinion gained ground that hierarchy in general had been broken down by it, while it was quite overlooked that the Reformation was even a restoration of a worn-out hierarchy. The hierarchy of the middle ages had been only a feeble one, since it had to allow all possible barbarity to persons to go on unchecked with it, and the Reformation first steeled the strength of the hierarchy. When Bruno Bauer said: 'As

the Reformation was principally the abstract separation of the religious principle from art, government, and science, and thus was its liberation from those powers with which it had been connected in the antiquity of the Church and in the hierarchy of the middle ages, so also the theological and ecclesiastical movements that proceeded from the Reformation were only the logical carrying out of this abstraction or separation of the religious principle from other powers of humanity';—and so I see on the contrary that which is right, and think that rule of the mind or mental freedom (which comes to the same thing) has never been before so comprehensive and powerful as at the present time, because now, instead of separating the religious principle from art, government, and science, it is rather raised entirely from the kingdom of this world into the realm of the spirit and made religious."

From the same point of view he considers the whole of the mental attitude introduced by the Reformation.

"How can one," he says, "maintain of modern philosophy and of the modern period that they have accomplished freedom when it has not freed us from the power of objectivity? Or am I free from despots when I no longer fear a personal tyrant, but am afraid of every outrage upon the loyalty which I owe to him?"

This is just the case in the modern period. It only changes existing objects, the actual ruler and so on, to an imagined one, that is, into ideas for which the old respect not only has not been lost but has

increased in intensity. If a piece was taken off the idea of God and the devil in their former gross realism, nevertheless only so much the more attention has been devoted to our conceptions of them. "They are free from devils, but evil has remained." To revolutionise the existing State, to upset the existing laws, was once thought little of, when it had once been determined to allow oneself to be no longer imposed upon by what was tangible and existing; but to sin against the conception of the State and not to submit to the conception of law—who has ventured to do that? So men remained "citizens" and "law-abiding, loyal men"; indeed, men thought themselves all the more law-abiding in proportion as they more rationalistically did away with the previous faulty law in order to do homage to the spirit of law. In all this it is only the objects that have changed but which have remained in their supremacy and authority; in short, men still followed obedience, lived in reflection, and had an object upon which they reflected, which they respected, and for which they felt awe and fear. Men have done nothing else but changed things into ideas of things, into thoughts and conceptions, and thus their dependence became all the more innate and irrevocable. It is, for example, not difficult to emancipate oneself from the commands of one's parents, or to pay no heed to the warnings of an uncle or an aunt, or to refuse the request of a brother or a sister; but the obedience thus given up lies easily upon one's conscience, and the less one gives way to individual sentiments, because one

recognises them from a rational point of view, and from our own reason to be unreasonable, the more firmly does one cleave conscientiously to piety and family love, and with greater difficulty does one forgive an offence against the idea which one has conceived of family love and the duty of piety. Released from our dependence upon the existing family life, we fall into the more binding submission to the idea of the family; we are governed by family spirit. And the family, thus raised up to an idea or conception, is now regarded as something "sacred," and its despotism is ten times worse, because its power lies in my conscience. This despotism is only broken when even the ideal conception of the family becomes nothing to me. And as it is with the family, so it is with morality. Many people free themselves from customs, but with difficulty do they get free from the idea of morality. Morality is the "idea" of custom, its spiritual power, its power over the conscience; on the other hand, custom is something too material to have power over the spirit, and does not fetter a man who is independent, a "free spirit."

Humanity strives for independence, and strives to overcome everything which is not a self, says Stirner; but how does this agree with the above-mentioned spread of the power of the mental conception and of the idea? To-day mankind is less free than before; so-called Liberalism only brings other conceptions forward; that is, instead of the divine, the human; instead of ecclesiastical ideas, those of the State; instead of those of faith, those of science; or

general statements, instead of the rough phrases and dogmas, actual ideas and everlasting laws.

In the movement for emancipation in modern times Stirner distinguishes three different varieties, the political, social, and humanitarian Liberalism.

Political Liberalism, according to Stirner, culminates in the thought that the State is all in all, and is the true conception of humanity; and that the rights of man for the individual consist in being the citizen of the State. Political Liberalism did away with the inequality of rights of feudal times, and broke the chains of servitude which at that period one man had forced upon another, the privilege upon him who was less privileged. It did away with all special interests and privileges, but it by no means created freedom; it only made one independent of the other, but yet made all the most absolute slaves to the State. It gave all power of right to the State, the individual only becomes something as a citizen, and only has those rights which the State gives him. Political Liberalism, says Stirner, created a few people, but not one free individual. Absolute monarchy only changed its name, being known formerly as "king," now as "people," "State," or "nation."

"Political freedom says that the *polis*, the State, is free; and religious freedom says that religion is free, just as freedom of conscience means that the conscience is free; but not that I am free from the State, from religion, or from conscience. It does not mean my freedom, but the freedom of some power which governs and compels me; it means that

one of my masters, such as State, religion, or conscience, is free. State, religion, and conscience, these despots make me a slave, and their freedom is my slavery." "If the principle is that only facts shall rule mankind, namely, the fact of morality or of legality, and so on, then no personal limitations of one individual by the other can be authorised—that is, there must be free competition. Only by actual fact can one person injure another, as the rich may injure the poor by money—that is, by a fact, but not as a person. There is henceforth only one authority, the authority of the State; personally no one is any longer lord over another. But to the State, all its children stand exactly in the same position; they possess 'civic or political equality,' and how they get on one with another is their own affair; they must compete. Free competition means nothing else than that everyone may stand up against someone else, make himself felt, and fight against him."

At this point (wherein Stirner by no means recognises immediate or economic individualism) social Liberalism—that which we to-day call social Democracy or communal Socialism—separates from the political. With a cleverness which we cannot sufficiently admire, Stirner proceeds to show that these directions which are so totally opposed are essentially the same, and regards the latter merely as the logical outcome from the former.

"The freedom of man is, in political Liberalism, the freedom from persons, from personal rule, from masters; security of any individual person, as re-

guards other persons, is personal freedom. No one can give any commands; the law alone commands. But if persons have become equal, their positions certainly have not. And yet the poor man needs the rich, and the rich man needs the poor; the former needs the money of the rich, the latter the work of the poor. Thus no one needs anyone else as a person; but he needs him as a giver, or as one who has something to give, as a proprietor or possessor. Thus what he has, that makes a man. And in having or in possession people are unequal. Consequently, so social Liberalism concludes, no one must possess, just as, according to political Liberalism, no one must command—that is, as here the State alone has the power of command, so now society alone has the power of possessing.” As in political Liberalism, the State is the source of all right; the individual only enjoys so much of it as the State gives him, so the social State, now called society, is also the only master of all possessions, and the individual must only have so much as society lets him share in. “Before the highest Ruler,” says Stirner in his rough language, “before the only Commander, we all become equal—equal persons, that is, nonentities. Before the highest owner of property we all become vagabonds alike. And now one person is, in the estimation of another, a vagabond, a ‘havenought,’ but then this estimate of each other stops, we are all at once vagabonds, and we can only call the totality of communist society ‘a conglomeration of vagabonds.’ ”

That which Stirner, finally, under the name of

humanitarian Liberalism, places side by side with the two tendencies just mentioned has nothing to do, generally speaking, with the political and material relations of mankind, and is the philosophical Liberalism of Feuerbach, who places freedom of thought in the same position as his predecessors put freedom of the person. "In the human society which humanitarianism promises," says Stirner, "nothing can be recognised which any person has as something 'special,' nothing shall have any value which bears the mark of a 'private' individual. In this way the circle of Liberalism completes itself, having in humanity its good principle, in the egotist and every 'private' person its evil one; in the former its God, in the latter its devil. If the special or private person lost his value in the State, and if special or private property ceased to be recognised in the community of workers or vagabonds, then in human society everything special or private is left out of consideration, and when pure criticism shall have performed its difficult work, then we shall know what is private, and what one must leave alone in *seines Nichts durchbohrendem Gefühle*." Political Liberalism regulated the relations of might and right, social Liberalism wishes to regulate those of property and labour, humanitarian Liberalism lays down the ethical principles of modern society.

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As may be seen, Stirner does not recognise the efforts and endeavours of all these tendencies to which we ascribe the complete transformation of

Europe in the last century, but, on the contrary, is prepared to perceive in them rather an intensification of the servitude in which the free Ego is held. The more spiritual, the more interesting, the more sublime and the more sacred ideas become for men, the greater becomes their respect for them, and the less becomes the freedom of the Ego as regards them. But as these ideas are merely creations of man's own spirit,—fiction and unreal forms,—all the so-called progress made by Liberalism is regarded by Stirner as nothing else than increasing self-delusion and constant retrogression. True progress evidently lies for him only in the complete emancipation of the Ego from this dominion of ideas that is in the triumph of egotism. "For Individualism (egotism) is the creator of everything, just as already genius [a definite egotism] which is always originality, is regarded as the creator of new historical productions. Freedom teaches us: set yourselves free, get rid of everything burdensome; but it does not teach you who you yourselves are. Free! free! so sounds its cry, and you eagerly follow it; become free from yourselves, and renounce yourselves. But Individualism calls you back to yourselves, and says: 'Come to yourself!' Under the ægis of freedom you become free from many things, but become subject again to some new thing; you are free from the Evil One, but abstract evil still remains. As individuals you are really free from everything, and what clings to you you have accepted. That is your choice and your wish. The individual is the one who is born free, the man who is free by birth. The

'free man,' on the other hand, is he who only looks for freedom, the dreamer, the enthusiast." Freedom is only possible together with the power to acquire it and to maintain it; but this power only resides in the individual. "My power is my property; my power gives me property; I am myself my own power, and am thereby my own property." This is, in a nutshell, Stirner's positive doctrine.

Right is power or might. "What you have the power to be, that you have the right to be. I derive all right and justification from myself alone; for I am entitled to everything which I have power to take or to do. I am entitled to overthrow Zeus, Jehovah or God, if I can; if I can *not*, these gods will always retain their rights and power over me; but I shall stand in awe of their rights and their power in impotent reverence, and shall keep their commands and believe I am doing right in everything that I do, according to their ideas of right, just as a Russian frontier sentry considers himself justified in shooting dead a suspicious person who runs away, because he relies upon a 'higher authority,' in other words, commits murder legally. But I am justified in committing a murder by myself, if I do not forbid it to myself, if I am not afraid of murder in the abstract as of 'something wrong.' I am only not justified in what I do not do of my own free will, that is, that which I do not give myself the right to do. I decide whether the right resides in me; for there is some right external to myself. If it is right to me, then it is right. It is possible that others may not regard it as right, but that is

their affair, not mine, and they must take their own measures against it. And if something was in the eyes of the whole world not right, and yet seemed right to me, that is, if I wished it, even then I should ask nothing from the world: thus does everyone who knows how to value himself, and each does it to the extent that he is an egotist, for might goes before right, and quite rightly too."

All existing right is external to the Ego; no one can give me my right, neither God, nor reason, nor Nature, nor the State; as to whether I am right or not there is only one judge and that is myself; others at most can pass a judgment and decide whether they support my right and whether it also exists as a right for them. Law is the will of the dominating power in a community. Every State is a despotism, whether the dominant power belongs to one, to many, or to all. A despotism would remain then, if, for example, in the national assembly the national will, that is to say, the individual wills of each person, really had overwhelmingly expressed itself, including also my own will; if then this wish becomes law I am bound to-morrow by what I wished yesterday, and then I thus become a servant, even though it be only the servant of myself. How can this be changed? "Only by my recognising no duty, neither letting myself bind nor be bound. If I have no duty then I also know no law." Wrong goes side by side with right, crime with legality. The unfettered Ego of Stirner is the never-ceasing criminal in the State; for only he who denies his "self," and who practises self-denial is acceptable

to the State. And thus with the disappearance of right comes also the disappearance of crime.

“The dispute about the right of property is violently waged. The Communists maintain that the earth belongs properly to him who cultivates it; and the products of the same to those who produce them. I maintain it belongs to him who knows how to take it, or who does not let it be taken from him or let himself be deprived of it; if he appropriates it, not merely the earth but also the right to it belongs to him. This is the egotistical right, that is, it is right for me, and therefore it is right.” How far Stirner is separated from Proudhon is shown most clearly in the question of property. Proudhon denied property because it was incompatible with justice. Stirner denies justice, and maintains property upon the grounds of the right of occupation. Proudhon declared that property was theft, but Stirner entirely reverses the phrase, and answers to the question, What is my property?—“Nothing but what is in my power.” To what property am I entitled?—“To that which I entitle myself.” “I give myself the right to property by taking property or by giving myself the power of the proprietor, a full power or title.”

The theory of occupation or seizure here appears to us in all its brutality. Nevertheless, even here Stirner is not frightened at the most extreme consequences of this theory, nor at the thought that one would have to defend one's property daily and hourly with a weapon in one's hand; and he is therefore inclined to make some concession to a voluntary

form of organisation. "If men reach the point of losing respect for property, each will have property; just as all slaves become freemen as soon as they regard their master no longer as master. Union will then multiply the means of the individual, and secure for him the property he has acquired by fighting. In the opinion of the Communists the community should be the only proprietor. The converse of this is, I am the proprietor, and merely come to some agreement with others about my property. If the community does not do right by me, I revolt against it, and defend my property. I am an owner of property, but property is not sacred." The regulation of society by itself is accepted by Stirner just as little as in the question of property, when it comes to the question of obtaining for the labourers a full reward of their labour. "They must rely upon themselves and ask nothing from the State," he answers. Only to a third very difficult question does this thoroughgoing theorist fail in an answer. He declares pauperism to be "lack of value of myself, when I cannot make my value felt; and, therefore, I can only get free from pauperism if I make my value felt as an individual, if I give myself value, and put my own price upon myself. All attempts at making the masses happy, and philanthropic associations arising from the principle of love, must come to grief, for help can only come to the masses through egotism, and this help they must and will procure for themselves. The question of property cannot be solved in such a legal way as the Socialists, and even the Communists,

imagine. It can only be solved by the war of all against all. The poor will only become free and be owners of property by revolting, rising, and raising themselves. However much is given them, they will always wish to have more; for they wish nothing less than that, at last, there shall remain nothing more to give. It will be asked: But what will happen then, when those who have nothing take courage and rise? What kind of equalisation will be made? One might just as well ask me to determine a child's nativity; what a slave will do when he has broken his chains one can only wait and see."

Step by step Stirner departs from Proudhon; the latter demands, in order to create his paradise, a balance, the former lays down the principle of natural selection as the highest and only law in social matters. The fight, the struggle for existence, which Proudhon strove to recognise in economic life, here enters upon its rights in all its brutality. The realisation of the self is, for Stirner, the key to the solution of the problems of work, property, and pauperism. He will have no division of goods, no organisation of labour. For Proudhon every piece of work is the result of a collective force, for Stirner the most valuable works are those of "individual" artists, savants, and so on, and their value is always to be determined only from the egoist standpoint.

To the question whether money should be maintained or done away with among egoists, he answers: "If you know a better medium of exchange, all right; but it will always be 'money.' It is not

money that does you harm, but your lack of power to take it. Let your power be felt, nerve yourselves, and you will not lack money—*your* money, the money of your own coining. But working I do not call letting your power be felt. Those who only 'seek for work, and are willing to work hard,' prepare for themselves inextinguishable lack of work." What we now-a-days call free competition, Stirner refuses to regard as free, since everyone has not the means for competing. "To abolish competition only means to favour members of some craft. The distinction is this: in a craft, such as baking, baking is the business of the members of the craft; under a system of competition it is the business of anyone who likes to compete; but in societies it is the business of those who use what is baked; thus, my or your business, not the business of the members of the craft, nor of the baker who has a concession given him, but of those in the union or society." Here for the second time we meet with the idea of a union, without Stirner expressing himself exactly about its character. Only in one other place does he happen to speak about the ideas of this union. He says the end of society is agreement or union. A society also certainly arises through union, but only in the same way as a fixed idea arises from a thought, namely, by the fact that the energy of the thought, thinking itself the restless absorption of all rising thoughts, disappears from thought. When a union has crystallised itself into a society, it has ceased to be an active union; for the act of union is a ceaseless uniting of individuals, it has become

a united existence, has come to a standstill, has degenerated into a fixity; it is dead as a union; it is the corpse of union, and of the act of union; that is, it is a society or community. What is known as "party" is a striking example of this.

Stirner admits that union cannot exist without freedom, being limited in all manner of ways. But absolute freedom is merely an ideal, a spectre, and the object of the union is not freedom, which it, on the contrary, sacrifices to individualism, but its object is only individualism. "Union is my creation, my implement, sacred to me, but has no spiritual power over my mind, and does not make me bow down to it; but I make it bow down to me, and use it for my own purposes. As I may not be a slave of my maxims, but without any guarantee expose them to my own continual criticism, and give no guarantee of their continuance, so, still less, do I pledge myself to the union for my future, or bind my soul to it; but I am and remain to myself more than State or Church, and consequently infinitely more than the union."

Just as we again recognise in this loose and always breakable union (although Stirner does not say so) that union whose mission he had declared it to be "to render secure property gained by force," to arrange the relations of production and consumption, and at the same time to create a certain unity of the means of payment; so, too, we have in this "union of egoists," as its author called it, all the constructive thought that Stirner's book either can or does contain. For a man who only acknowledges one

dimension, and only operates with one, considering everything not contained therein as non-existing, cannot form any of the combinations of which life consists, without coming into hopeless conflict with his principles. This Stirner has done, in spite of the vague and imaginary nature of his "union of egoists."

As Stirner had to acknowledge that this union or society cannot exist without freedom being limited in every way, he declared—since after all he requires union for some things—"absolute freedom" a creature of the imagination, as the opposite to "individuality," which is the main thing. But can it be believed that Stirner has set up an "absolute freedom" all of his own making, to place it in contrast with individuality. In other words, freedom is merely the possibility of living one's individuality, of being an "individual" in Stirner's sense. Freedom is the absence of every outside influence; it may be understood in an exoteric or esoteric sense; and throughout his whole book Stirner has done nothing but strip the "Ego" from every sign of outside compulsion; he has made it the "only one" by freeing it with relentless logic from everything external. He has depicted this act of liberation as the goal of all culture; and it finally emerges that all this story of the "only Ego" is a delusion, for "union" excludes "absolute individuality" as well as "absolute freedom"—because the two are identical.

Stirner, indeed, only spoke of an "absolute freedom" to represent it as a fiction of the imagination,

and on the other hand only of an individuality. Now his union does not exclude individuality and freedom, but only absolute individuality. But this last Stirner cannot admit, because it also he regards merely as a "spectre," an "obsession," a "fixed idea." But whether he admits it or not, what is Stirner's "individual" but an idea, something absolute? Stirner had begun with the intention of slaying Feuerbach's idea of "man" as a retrograde idealist fallacy, and of creating, like Prometheus, a new man, the *Unmensch*, in the Ego completed into a microcosm, and, as such, complete in itself, separate and independent. But that is, as a matter of fact, not the "no-man" but the superhuman Prometheus himself, the idea of Man which he attacked in Feuerbach. "Might," he says in one part of his book, "goes before right, and rightly too." This is exactly the logical scheme of the whole book. Away with everything absolute! Individuality goes before every idea, just because it is itself the absolute idea of the much-despised Hegel.

But suppose we do not take into consideration this fundamental contradiction. Let us suppose there is none, and that all Stirner's other assumptions are indisputable, that God, Humanity, Society, Right, the State, the Family are all classed in one category, as were abstractions and creations of my own "Ego," what follows? That these ideas, now that they have lost their absolute character, are no longer to be reckoned as factors in the organisation of life? It is so, if one regards only that which is absolute as entitled to exist; but Stirner would drive everything

absolute from its very last positions. And does it follow further from the circumstance that one of these factors has lost its controlling influence over mankind that all the others, because they too are not absolute, should be denied all practical significance? Put in concrete form, the question stands thus: (1) Has the idea of Deity lost its practical significance, because it has been divested of its absolute character, and its purely empiric origin has been recognised? and (2) If the idea of Right is no more an absolute one than the idea of Deity, does it follow that the influence of Right must be placed upon the same plane as the influence of conscience?

As to the first point, I am relieved from any answer in view of the thorough treatment of these questions by the light of modern investigation. The second question I prefer to leave to some professional jurist, who knows the nature of law, and at the same time has every intention of doing justice to Stirner.

Dr. Rudolf Stammler says,¹ after showing that the necessity of the influence of Law for human society cannot be proved *a priori*: "It is the theory of Anarchism which must lead us with special force to a train of thought that has never yet appeared in the literature of legal philosophy, although it makes clear, in a manner universally valid, the necessity of legal compulsion in itself and justifies legal organisation. For the antithesis of our present mode of social life, based on law and right, is, as conceived by Anarchism as its ideal and goal, the union and

¹ Stammler, *Die Theorie des Anarchismus*, Berlin, 1894, p. 42.

ordering of men in freely formed communities, and entirely under rules framed by convention. Though the individual Anarchist may regard a union of egoists as a postulate, or may desire fraternal Communism, yet each must determine for himself his connection with such a community. Let him enter freely into the supposed agreement and break it again as seems good to him, it is still the stipulations of the agreement that bind him as long as the agreement exists; an agreement which he must first enter into and can at any time break regardless of conditions by a new expression of his will. From this it is that this kind of organisation, which forms the core of the theory of Anarchism, is only possible for such of mankind as are actually qualified and capable of uniting with others in some form of agreement. Those who are not capable of acting for themselves, as we jurists say, such as the little child, those who are of unsound mind, incapacitated by illness and old age, all these would be entirely excluded from such an organisation and from all social life. For as soon as, for example, an infant has been taken into this society and subjected to its rules, the compulsion of law would have been again introduced, and authority would have been exercised over a human being without the proper rules for his assent being observed. The Anarchist organisation of man's social life therefore fails, inasmuch as it is possible only for certain special persons, qualified empirically, and excludes others who lack these qualifications. I therefore conclude the necessity of legal compulsion, not from the fact that without

it the small and weak would fare but badly; for I cannot know this for certain beforehand and as a general rule. Nor do I deduce the recognised and justified existence of legal arrangements from the fact that only by these can the 'true' freedom of each individual be attained without the interference of any third person; for that would not be justified by the facts of history, and would certainly not follow from formal legal compulsion in itself. Rather, I base the lawfulness of law and the rightness of right, in its formal state, upon the consideration that a legal organisation is the only one open to all human beings without distinction of special fortuitous qualifications. To organise means to unite under rules. Such a regulation of human relationships is a means to an end, an instrument serving the pursuit of the final end of the highest possible perfection of man. Hence only that regulation of human society can be universally justified which can embrace universally all human beings without reference to their subjective or different peculiarities. Law alone can do this. So even under a bad law legal compulsion in itself retains its sound foundation. Its existence does not cease to be justified, nor is it even touched, by any chance worthlessness of the concrete law in question: it is firmly founded, because it alone offers the possibility of a universally valid, because universally human, organisation. Therefore social progress can only be made by perfecting law as handed down by history, according to its content, and not by abolishing legal compulsion as such."

These conclusions block the way for the mischievous misapplications of distorted expressions of an exact thinker such as Ihering. Ihering certainly took away ruthlessly the ideological basis of law, but he never denied or attacked necessity of legal compulsion as Stirner did. We might just as well ascribe to Darwin the intention of disowning man because he set forth man's natural descent.

It is of just as little use to claim that past master of sociology, Herbert Spencer, in support of Stirner's views, because Spencer too recognises the purely egoistical origin of law and of social organisation. Egoism and Anarchism are not so mutually interchangeable as Stirner thinks. The question is, first of all, whether egoism after all really finds its account in the "union of egoists." It has been already more than once remarked that here too, as in the case of Proudhon, we only have to do, at bottom, with the logical extension of the present order of society that rests on free competition. "Make your value felt" is still to-day the highest economic principle; and he whose value, whose individuality consists in knowledge alone without an adequate admixture of worldly wisdom, would probably fare no better in the more perfect Anarchist world than the poor schoolmaster Caspar Schmidt in our *bourgeois* society, who suffered all the pangs of hunger and greeted Death as his redeemer.

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Stirner did not form any school of followers in Germany in his own time, but Julius Faucher (1820-

78) who was known as a publicist and a rabid Free-trader, represented his ideas in his newspaper *Die Abendpost* (*The Evening Post*), published in Berlin in 1850. This paper was, of course, soon suppressed, and the only apostle of Stirner's gospel thereupon left the Continent and went to England, to turn to something more practical than Anarchism, or (to use Stirner's own jargon) to realise his "Ego" more advantageously. How strange and anomalous Stirner's individualism appeared even to the most advanced Radicals of Germany in that period appears very clearly from a conversation recorded by Max Wirth,¹ which Faucher had with the stalwart Republican Schlöffel, in an inn frequented by the Left party in the Parliament of Frankfort. "Schlöffel loved to boast of his Radical opinions, just as at that time many men took a pride in being as extreme as possible among the members of the Left. He expressed his astonishment that Faucher held aloof from the current of politics. 'It is because you are too near the Right party for me,' answered Faucher, who delighted in astonishing people with paradoxes. Schlöffel stroked his long beard proudly, and replied, 'Do you say that to *me*?' 'Yes,' continued Faucher, 'for you are a Republican incarnate; you still want a State. Now *I* do not want a State at all, and, consequently, I am a more extreme member of the Left than you.' It was the first time Schlöffel had heard these paradoxes, and he replied: 'Nonsense; who can emancipate us

¹ "Zur Geschichte des Anarchismus," *Neue Freie Press*, 26th July 1894 (No. 10,748).

from the State ?' 'Crime,' was Faucher's reply, uttered with an expression of pathos. Schlöffel turned away, and left the drinking party without saying a word more. The others broke out laughing at the proud demagogue being thus outdone: but no one seems to have suspected in the words of Faucher more than a joke in dialectics." This anecdote is a good example of the way in which Stirner's ideas were understood, and shows that Faucher was the only individual "individual" among the most Radical politicians of that time.¹ On the other hand, Proudhon's doctrines, which in their native France could not find acceptance, gained a few proselytes among the Radical Democrats, and especially among the Communists of Switzerland and the Rhine.

Moses Hess was, among Germans, the first to seize hold upon the word "Anarchy" fearlessly and spread it abroad. This was in 1843, thus shortly after the appearance of Proudhon's sensational book on property, where the word was first definitely adopted as the badge of a party. Hess was born at Bonn in 1812, and was meant for a merchant's life, but turned his attention to studies picked up later, more especially to Hegelian philosophy, and entered upon the career of literature. In the beginning of the forties he propounded in his works on *The Philosophy of Action* and *Social-*

¹ It is characteristic that even the German followers of Proudhon, as, e. g., Marr, Grün, and others, had a very poor opinion of Stirner, and never dreamed of any connection between his views and those of Proudhon.

ism a confused programme, in which the Communism of Weitling was curiously intermingled with the views of Proudhon. In 1845 he expressed his views in a paper called *The Mirror of Society* (*Gesellschaftsspiegel*), that appeared later in 1846, under the title of *The Social Conditions of the Civilised World*, and represented the extreme views of Rhenish Socialism. Moses Hess died in obscurity in 1872.

Hess went farther than Proudhon, in that he differed from Proudhon's carefully thought-out and measured organisation of society by demanding, under Anarchy, the abolition of the influence, in social, mental, and moral life, not only of the State and the Church, but also in like manner of any or all external dominion. All action, he declared, must proceed exclusively from the internal decision of the individual acting upon the external world, and not *vice versa*. Action which did not proceed from internal impulse, but from external—whether from external compulsion, necessity, desire for gain, or enjoyment—was “not free,” and thus merely “a burden or a vice.” This cannot be the case under Anarchy, for there every work will bring its own reward in itself. The manner and duration of a man's work will depend entirely on his inclination, thus introducing an individual arbitrary will unknown as yet to Proudhon. Society will offer to each just as much as he “reasonably” needs for self-development and the satisfaction of his wants. As the means of introducing “Anarchism” Hess mentions the improvement of the system of education, the introduction of universal suffrage, and—a

thing which Proudhon always opposed—the erection of national workshops.

Karl Grün, however, was not only in friendly personal relationship with Proudhon, but also perfectly imbued with his ideas. Born on September 30, 1817, at Ludenscheid, in Westphalia, he studied at Bonn and Berlin, and later became a teacher of German at the college of Colmar. Later he founded in Mannheim the radical newspaper, the *Mannheimer Zeitung*, and when expelled from Baden and Bavaria went to Cologne, where for some time he continued active as a lecturer and journalist. During the winter of 1844 and 1845 he had made the acquaintance of Proudhon personally in Paris, and had inoculated him with Hegelian philosophy, and in return brought back Proudhon's views with him to Germany. The result of this first visit to Paris was the work entitled, *The Social Movement in France and Belgium*,¹ one of the most important works on advanced Socialism in Germany, which made known the Socialist views of Frenchmen, and especially of Proudhon, to the German public in an attractive form. In 1849 Grün made another stay in Paris. Returning thence to Germany, he was elected a member of the Prussian National Assembly; then, being arrested for alleged complicity in the Palatinate rising, was at length acquitted after eight months' imprisonment. He then lived in Belgium

¹ Grün wrote many works on literature and the history of art, and also *Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the Sphinx on the French Throne* (3d ed., 1866); *France before the Judgment Seat of Europe* (1860); *Italy* (1861), etc.

and Italy, engaged actively in literary work; later on became a teacher at the School of Commerce in Frankfort, visited the Rhine towns on a lecturing tour from 1865 to '68, and migrated in 1868 to Vienna, where he resided till his death in 1887.

Grün goes farther than his master Proudhon, and, like Hess, sowed the seed of the Communist Anarchy which has only attained its full growth as a doctrine in quite recent years. In this he totally rejected the principle of reward or wages maintained by Proudhon. "Proudhon never got beyond this obstacle," he says; "he anticipates it, seeks it, he would like it, he introduces it: the farther association extends, the greater the number of workmen, the less becomes the work of each, the more distinction between them disappears. That is a mathematical proceeding, not social or human. What distinction is to disappear? The distinction among producers is to become progressively smaller. The natural distinction of capacity which society abolishes by the social equality of wages. Preach the social freedom of consumption, and then you have at once the true freedom of production. Reverse the case: are you so anxious about lack of production? Recent progress in science may assure you. Perhaps children up to fifteen years of age would be able to perform all necessary household duties as mere guides of machinery—even in holiday attire, as a game of play! Everyone is paid according to what he produces, and the production of each is limited by the right of all. But no! no limitation! Let us have no right of all against the right

of the individual. On the contrary, the consumption of each is guaranteed by the consumption of all. The production of one is not paid for by the product of another, but each pays out of the common product." We shall meet with the same ideas in Kropotkin, only more definite.

Proudhon found an ardent disciple in Wilhelm Marr, who at that time stood at the head of the German Democratic Union of manual workmen of "young Germany" in Switzerland. Born on May 6, 1819, at Magdeburg, Marr was originally intended for a merchant's calling, but after his stay in Switzerland (1841) gave it up entirely, and turned his attention to a political and literary career. At first, attracted by Weitling's Communism, he later on came into decided opposition to it from his accentuation of the individualist standpoint, which he, as an ardent follower of Feuerbach, pursued according to Proudhon's rather than Stirner's views. In conjunction with a certain Hermann Döleke, Marr endeavoured to instil these views into the above-mentioned Swiss workmen's unions. His programme was quite of a negative character; as he himself describes it: "The abolition of all prevailing ideas of Religion, State, and Society was the aim, which we followed with a full knowledge of its logical consequences." Döleke called it the "theory of no consolation" (*Trostlosigkeits-theorie*). In December, 1844, Marr published a journal in Lau-

¹ *Die sociale Bewegung*, p. 433. Darmstadt, 1845.

² Wilhelm Marr, *Das junge Deutschland in der Schweiz*, p. 135. Leipsic, 1846.

sanne called *Pages of the Present for Social Life* (*Blätter der Gegenwart für sociales Leben*), to promote the literary acceptance of this theory. "With remorseless logic," says Marr himself (*Das junge Deutschland*, p. 271) "we attacked not only existing institutions in State and Church, but State and Church themselves in general; and as a first attempt, which we in the second number made in the shape of an article upon the Tschech outrage, produced no ill consequences for us, our audacity grew to such a pitch that Döleke often preached Atheism, and the word 'Atheism' was to be seen at the head of his articles. I did the same in the department of social criticism, while, following the example of Proudhon, I put before my readers at the very beginning the final consequences of my argument." For a time the Government did not interfere with Marr's propaganda, but in July, 1845, it stopped the publication of his journal, and Marr was soon after expelled from the country. This was the end of the results of his propaganda in Switzerland; for in the popular reflex of Marr's doctrines we can hardly find more than the Radicalism of German Democrats, as preached by Börne, coloured by a few traces of Proudhon's teaching. This shade of opinion was then quite modern; we recognise it in Alfred Meisener, Ludwig Pfau, and the Vienna group, even in Börne, who died in the forties; the doctrine was part of the spirit of the age, and did not need to be derived from Proudhon.

Wilhelm Marr, after many and various political metamorphoses, took sides with the Anti-Semites,

and acquired the unenviable reputation of being one of the literary fathers of this questionable movement. Recently he has again abandoned this movement, and living embittered in retirement in Hamburg, has once more devoted the flabby sympathies of his old age to the Anarchist ideals of his youth.

Marr forms the link between the pure theory of Anarchism and active Anarchist agitation, between the older generation who laid down the principles and the modern Anarchists. The acute reaction following upon the years 1848 and '49 extinguished the scanty growth that had sprung from the seed sown by Proudhon and Stirner. Only when in the sixties, with the reviving Social-Democratic movement there naturally arose also its opposite, the "Anti-Authoritative Socialism," did men proceed to complete the work begun by Proudhon and Stirner. Recent proceedings in this direction have, however, not only not added any essential feature to the theory of Anarchism, but rather have obscured the former sharp outlines of its ideas, and introduced into its theory elements which are really quite foreign and contradictory to it, and have prevented that peaceful discussion of it which might be advantageous to all parties. This distinction between the older and the more modern theorists of Anarchism is most clearly marked in Bakunin with his introduction of "Russian influence"; with Bakunin begins the theory of active agitation.

PART II

MODERN ANARCHISM

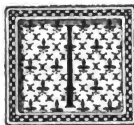


CHAPTER IV

RUSSIAN INFLUENCES

The Earliest Signs of Anarchist Views in Russia in 1848—The Political, Economic, Mental, and Social Circumstances of Anarchism in Russia—Michael Bakunin—Biography—Bakunin's Anarchism—Its Philosophic Foundations—Bakunin's Economic Programme—His Views as to the Practicability of his Plans—Sergei Netschajew—The Revolutionary Catechism—The Propaganda of Action—Paul Brousse.

“L'Église et l'État sont
Mes deux bêtes noires.”—BAKUNIN.



IN Russia traces of Anarchist views are found as far back as the stormy period of 1848-49. The extent of poverty, both mental and material, in the vast dominion of the Czar caused the Russian people to be less ready to accept and propagate political ideals of freedom than to comprehend the Socialist doctrines that were then first springing up in Western Europe. The great movement that seized upon and shook all Central and Western Europe died down in Russia to a few isolated centres of life, and was felt chiefly in secret

debating societies which eagerly received and disseminated the writings of Considerant, Fourier, Saint-Simon, Blanc, and Proudhon.

The reading of Proudhon's works was even undertaken as a duty by the most important of these societies, the so-called " Association of Petraschewski." The extent to which his teaching impressed the thoughtful members of this society, which included among others Dostojewski, cannot easily be determined, since the companions of Petraschewski, like the Nihilists of to-day, have always liked to preserve a certain eclecticism. However, one trace of the influence of Proudhon's doctrines upon its members is distinctly visible. Thus, an associate, Lieutenant Palma of the Guards, had designed a book of laws, in which we are surprised to meet the following passage, quite in the Anarchist vein: " The chief distinctive feature of man is that he is a being endowed with a personality, *i. e.*, with reason and freedom, which is an end in itself, and ought not under any circumstances to be regarded as a means or end for others. From the idea of personality is derived the idea of right. I may do everything that I please, because each of my actions is the result of my reason." Petraschewski himself, in a satirical *Dictionary* which he published under the pseudonym of Kirilow, praised as one of the merits of early Christianity the abolition of private property and so on. We can easily recognise here the elements of Proudhon's and Stirner's Anarchism.

In spite of the severe prohibitive system that came in force after 1848, the teachings of English

and French Socialists penetrated into Russia even in this period, and were disseminated by such eminent men as Tschernichevsky, Dobrolinbow, Herzen, Ogarjow, and others, to wider circles, and again we see that interest is chiefly taken in Proudhon's doctrines. These found their way deep into the heart of the masses, even to the peasants. It must not be forgotten that to the Russian peasants, with their already existing collectivist village communities, Proudhon's ideas were far more easy to understand than an educated Frenchman or German found them. There is probably no country in the world where the principles of "federative Socialism," as taught by Proudhon and later by Bakunin, were better understood than in Russia, and Bakunin even denied the necessity of a Socialist propaganda among Russian peasants, because he said that they already possessed a knowledge of its elements.

The broad, subterranean stream of Nihilism, which, swelling from these small beginnings to a dread power and strength, has undermined both feet of the Colossus of the Russian Empire, disappears here from our view. We can only notice individual men who, separated from the main body of the movement, made ready the path of revolution in their native land while living as voluntary or involuntary exiles in Western Europe. 'It may appear superfluous to remark upon the important *rôle* played by Russians on the revolutionary committees of every country. And in no revolutionary movement have they gained such a disastrous influence or played such a leading part as in Anarchism. When,

in the sixties, Socialism, with its organisation of the working-class movement, grew up side by side with the revival of political Liberalism, then, too, by a natural law, arose the extreme form of protest against the aggregation of human society by Communism; the Anarchist doctrine naturally rose up from the complete oblivion in which it had lain for ten years. But modern Anarchism celebrated its renaissance in a totally different form: times and men had changed; the philosophic period was passed, Stirner was dead, and Proudhon near his end; Russian godfathers stood round the cradle of modern Anarchism. Men of lofty idealism, who, impregnated with Western culture, with bold violence, wished to anticipate by several ages the natural development of mankind, have given up to Anarchy, as the empire of perfect and free personality, their whole heart and mind. But those who gave to this doctrine—justified to some extent, like every other one-sided view, in spite of all its extravagance, contradictions, and inherent impossibility—the sanction of the dagger, the revolver, petroleum, and dynamite, were neither Frenchmen nor Germans, but the half-civilised barbarians of the East.

The older form of Anarchism is marked by that lofty idealism which was the general mental attitude of civilised Western Europe in the first half of this century. The modern Anarchism of Bakunin, Netschajew, Kropotkin, and others, is branded by the semi-civilised culture of Russia, whose only object is the destruction of every existing state of

things, and indeed under existing circumstances it cannot be otherwise. Dislike of, and discontent with real or fancied grievances, combined with a stiff-necked, *doctrinaire* attitude unprepared for any *sacrificio del intelletto*, may indeed lead the children of Western civilisation to a logical denial of the existing order of society. But from this to the actual overthrow of all existing conditions is a still farther step; and the positive intention of annihilating the infinite mental and material inheritance which is the outcome of civilisation, and which is not even denied by Anarchists themselves, could only be conceived by a few degenerate individuals who could only wish to see themselves *vis-à-vis de rien* because of their own utter lack of moral, intellectual, or material possessions. Against these individuals there will always be arrayed an overwhelming majority, who are ready to pledge the whole weight of their superiority in culture for these possessions and guarantees of the undeniable progress of mankind.

It is different in Russia. The political and social, the mental and moral conditions of this large but barbarian empire do not afford much opportunity for the growth even of a moderate amount of conservatism. For what can there be to conserve, to maintain, or to improve in those lives that depend on the mere sign of a bloodthirsty and savage despotism, in that society that has hardly raised itself from the primitive tribal level, in those rotten national economics, trade and industry, in a spiritual life groaning under the banner of orthodoxy and an arbitrary police, of popes and Tschinowniks? Must

not the only possible way, the inevitable presupposition of any possible improvement be a desire for a total and universal overthrow, a radical annihilation of all these conditions that render life and development impossible? The Russian need not shrink from the thought that all present conditions should be annihilated, for when he looks round about him he finds nothing that his heart would care to preserve; and the higher he ranks in the mental or social sphere, the stronger must this "Nihilist" feeling naturally become. We who are citizens of a State that, with all its faults, is yet richly blessed by civilisation, show our comprehension of these facts by regarding with a milder and more sympathetic glance the acts of a few desperate men in Russia, which we should condemn severely if they occurred under the happier circumstances that surround ourselves. In fact, nothing is more natural—lamentable as it may be—than that, under circumstances such as those of Russia, revolutionary Radicalism should assume this purely negative "Nihilist" and murderously destructive character in the desperate struggle of the individual against a society that is totally degenerate.

"Among us," says Stepniak,¹ "a revolution or even a rising of any importance, such as those in Paris, is absolutely impossible. Our towns contain barely a tenth of the total population, and most of them are merely great villages, miles and miles away one from another. The real towns, such as, *e. g.*,

¹ *Underground Russia*, 3d edition, pp. 34 ff. and 41. London, 1890.

those of from 10,000 or 15,000 inhabitants, contain only 4 or 5 per cent. of the total population—that is, about three or four million people. And the Government which rules over the military contingent of the whole people—that is, over 1,200,000 soldiers—can transform the five or six chief towns, the only places where any movement would be possible, into veritable camps, as is indeed the case. Against such a Government any means are permissible; for it is no longer the guardian of the people's will or even of the will of a majority. It is injustice organised; a citizen need respect it no more than a band of highway robbers. But how can we shake off this Camarilla that shelters itself behind a forest of bayonets? How can we free the country from it? Since it is absolutely impossible to remove this hindrance by force, as in other more fortunate countries, a flank movement was necessary in order to attack this Camarilla before it could make use of its power, which thus was made useless in fruitless positions. Thus Terrorism arose. Nurtured in hatred, suckled by patriotism and hope, it grew up in an electric atmosphere, filled by the enthusiasm that is awakened by a noble deed."

These same features were necessarily assumed in Russia by Anarchist doctrines, which from their very nature found a friendly and (as we have seen) an early reception, and were practically incorporated with Nihilism, but, as must be distinctly noted, without becoming identical with it, or even forming an essential and integral part of it. In fact, we find in avowed Nihilists and Panslavists, such as Herzen,

the fundamental Anarchist ideas present just as much as in Bakunin and Kropotkin, whose Anarchism was superior to their Panslavism. In his book, *After the Storm (Après la Tempête)*, composed under the impression made by the disappointed hopes and expectations of 1848, Herzen exclaimed: "Let all the world perish! Long live Chaos and Destruction"; and in a work that appeared almost at the same time, *The Republic One and Indivisible*, he attacked the Republican form of government as "the last dream of the old world," which yet could not succeed in carrying out the great fundamental law of social justice. Only when this has become really a truth, only when there is an end of men being devoured by men, will humanity, born again, rise free and happy from the ruins of this present cursed social structure: "Spring will come; young, fresh life will blossom on the graves of the races who have died as victims of injustice; nations will rise up full of chaotic but healthy forces. A new volume of the world's history will begin." The share of Nihilism in such ideas cannot be borrowed altogether from Western Anarchism. There was perhaps a mutual interaction of intellectual growth. But one gift Anarchism certainly did receive from Nihilism: "the propaganda of action" does not spring from the logical development of Proudhon's and Stirner's ideas, and cannot be extorted or extracted from it in any way; it is rather the consequence of the mixture of these ideas with Nihilism, a result of Russian conditions. This was the pretty embellishment with which the West received back

Anarchism from Russian hands in the era of the sixties and seventies. Bakunin was entrusted with the gloomy mission of handing this gift over to us, and it is noticeable that in Bakunin—as in Nihilism generally—Anarchism by no means takes up that exclusively commanding position as in Proudhon, with whom he yet is so closely connected.

Michael Bakunin was born in 1814 at Torschok in the Russian province of Tver, being a scion of a family of good position belonging to the old nobility. An uncle of Bakunin's was an ambassador under Catherine II., and he was also connected by marriage with Muravieff. He was educated at the College of Cadets in St. Petersburg, and joined the Artillery in 1832 as an ensign. But either, as some say, because he did not get into the Guards, or, as others say, because he could not endure the rough terrorism of military life, he left the army in 1838, and returned first to his father's house, where he devoted himself to scientific studies. In 1841 Bakunin went to Berlin, and next year to Dresden, where he studied philosophy, chiefly Hegel's but was also introduced by Ruge into the German democratic movement. Even at that time he had come to the conclusion (in an essay in the *Deutschen Jahrbücher* on "The Reaction in Germany") that Democracy must proceed to the denial of everything positive and existing, without regard for consequences. Pursued by Russian agents, he went in 1843 to Paris, and thence to Switzerland, where he became an active member of the Communist-

Socialist movement. The Russian Government now refused him permission to stay abroad any longer, and as he did not obey repeated commands to return to his native land, it confiscated his property. From Zürich, Bakunin returned a second time to Paris, and made the acquaintance of Proudhon. If here was laid the foundation for his later Anarchist views, we still find him active in another political direction. In a high-flown speech made at the Polish banquet on the anniversary of the Warsaw Revolution (29th November, 1847), Bakunin recommended the union of Russia and Poland in order to revolutionise the former. The Russian Government thereupon demanded his extradition, and set a price of ten thousand silver roubles on his head. In spite of this, Bakunin escaped safely to Brussels. After the Revolution of February, he returned to Paris, then went in March to Berlin, and in June to attend the Slav Congress in Prague.

The question has not unnaturally been raised, What had Bakunin the cosmopolitan to do at such an institution of national Chauvinism as the Congress? What had the ultra-radical Democrat and sworn enemy of the Czar to do with a congress held by the favour of Nicholas, and visited by orthodox Archimandrites, by the envoys of Slav princes, and privy councillors decorated with Russian orders? When the drama at Prague ended with a sanguinary insurrection and the bombardment of Prague, Bakunin disappeared, only to re-appear again, now in Saxony and now in Thuringia, under all kinds of disguises, and (as those who are well-informed main-

tain)¹ constantly occupied with the intention of causing a new insurrection at Prague. Here too he was in contradiction with the attitude that he had adopted both before and after this event, for he must have known what a sorry part the Czechs had played and still were playing as regards the Vienna Democracy and the efforts for Hungarian emancipation.

During the insurrection in May, 1849, we find Bakunin in Dresden, as a member of the provisional government, and taking a prominent part in the defence of the city against the Prussian troops. Bakunin here appears as a champion of the very same cause that he had attacked at the Prague Congress. After the fall of Dresden he went with the provisional government to Chemnitz, where on the 10th of May he was captured and condemned to death by martial law. The sentence, however, was not carried out, since Austria had demanded his extradition. Here he was also condemned at Olmutz to be hanged; but Austria handed this offender, who was so much in request, over to Russia, which country also wished to get hold of him. By a remarkable chance, Bakunin escaped the death to which here also he was condemned, by receiving a pardon from the Czar; he was imprisoned first in the fortress of SS. Peter and Paul, and then at that of Schlüsselburg; and in 1855, through the exertions of his influential relatives, was banished to Siberia. At that time a report had generally gained

¹ Karl Blind, "Väter des Anarchismus" (Persönliche Erinnerungen), 4 feuillets in the *Neue Freie Presse*, 1894.

credence in Europe, although lacking any foundation, that Bakunin had by no means owed his life, that three countries had already condemned, to the chance favour of a monarch usually far from gracious; and the distrust of the apostle of Revolution was still more greatly increased when, in 1861, he succeeded in escaping from the penal settlement in the Amur district, and returned to Europe *via* Japan and America. Now the otherwise mysterious success of this escape has been explained. The Governor of the Amur (Muravieff-Amurski) happened to be a cousin of Bakunin's relation, Muravieff, and moreover (according to Bakunin's own statement),¹ a secret adherent of the revolutionary movement. He appears to have lived on a very intimate footing with Bakunin, and granted the exile all kinds of favours and freedom; and thus Bakunin was entrusted with the mission of travelling through Siberia in order to describe its natural resources. While on this journey he succeeded in embarking on a ship in the harbour of Nikolajewsk, and escaping. In 1861 he arrived in England, and settled in London, where he entered into relations with the members of the "International." As to the part that Bakunin played here, as he did later, as an

¹ There is a kind of autobiography for the period 1849-60, by Bakunin himself in a letter, dated from Irkutsk (8th December, 1860) to Herzen. *Michael Bakunin's Social-Political Correspondence with Alexander Iw. Herzen and Ogarjow*, with a biographical introduction, appendices, and notes by Professor Michael Dragomanoff. Authorised translation from the Russian, by Dr. Boris Minzès, Stuttgart, 1895 (*Bibl. russischer Denkwürdigkeiten*, edited by Dr. Th. Schiemann, vol. vi.), No. 6, pp. 29 and 99.

agitator for Anarchist ideas, we will speak later when we come to the history of the spread of Anarchism.

When the Revolution broke out in Poland in 1863, Bakunin was one of the leaders of the expedition of Polish and Russian emigrants that was planned in Stockholm, and which was to revolutionise Russia from the Baltic coast. When this attempt also failed, he stayed sometimes in Russia and sometimes in Italy, devoting himself to Socialist agitation, and being always on every favourable opportunity active either as an apostle of Anarchist doctrine or as an agitator in the preparations and *mise-en-scène* of a revolution. We shall speak of this later. The last years of his life were spent alternately in Geneva, Locarno, and Bern, where he died on July 1, 1878, at the hospital, after refusing all nourishment, and thus hastening his end.

The Anarchist epoch of his life is included mainly in the last ten years of his career, so fertile in mistakes and changes of opinion. Anarchism owes its renaissance to his active agitation, regardless of all consequences; and even in his writings the thinker lags far behind the agitator. Bakunin at best could only be called the theorist of action; his activity as an author was limited to scattered articles in journals and a few (mostly fragmentary) pamphlets. He was right in his answer to those critics who reproached him with this: "My life itself is but a fragment." Where could he have found in his life-long wanderings the peaceful leisure in which to develop his thoughts quietly or to express them in a work such as

Proudhon's *Justice* or Stirner's *Einzigiger*? Besides, he lacked the gift of mental depth and firmly grounded knowledge. His style possesses something of his fluency as a demagogue, but his procedure in science reminds of the soaring dialectics of the revolutionary orator, full of repetitions, and attractive rather than convincing. In his case a pose always takes the place of an argument.

It is said that during the period of his association with the "International" Bakunin had had the intention of setting forth his ideas in two large works, one of which would have been a criticism of the existing arrangements of the State, property, and religion, while the other would have treated of the problems of the European nations, especially the Slavs, and have shown their solution by social revolution and anarchy. But, of course, these two works were never written, and there remain to us only some remnants of numerous fragmentary and formless manuscripts, originating in the period of 1863-73. Among these is a *Catechism of Modern Freemasonry*, the *Revolutionary Catechisms*, not to be compared with the later catechism of Netschajew, which was wrongly ascribed to Bakunin; also the wordy essay on *Federation, Socialism, and Anti-theology*, which as a proposal designed for the central committee of the League of Freedom and Peace at Geneva, but never published, presents a short reprint of Proudhon's *Justice*; and lastly, a fragment published in 1882 by C. Cafiero and Elisée Reclus, after his manuscript, *Dieu et l'État*, which seems intended to lay a philosophic foundation for Bakunin's Anarchism.

This fragment, in which Bakunin follows the lead of the great materialists and Darwinians, begins with Hegelianism. Man (it says) is of animal origin; all development proceeds from the "animal nature" of man, and strives to reach the negation of this, or humanity. "Animality" is the starting-point; "humanity," its opposite, is the goal of development. The first human being, the pitheco-anthropus, distinguished itself, according to Bakunin, from other apes, by two gifts: the capacity for thinking, and, thereby, for raising itself. Bakunin, therefore, distinguishes three elements in all life: (1) animality; (2) thought; and (3) rising. To the first corresponds social and private economy; to the second, science; to the third, freedom. After establishing these peculiar categories, Bakunin never troubles about them again throughout his book, and does not know what use to make of them; they were nothing but a pretty philosophic pose, sand thrown in one's eyes. He goes farther, and declares next that he intends to penetrate into the reason "of the idealism of Mazzini, Michelet, Quinet, and [*sic* !] Stuart Mill." Again we hear nothing more throughout this fragmentary work of the thus announced refutation of Mill's idealism. It is limited to giving a rather shallow reproduction of Proudhon's contrast between religion and revolution.

"The idea of God," says Bakunin, "implies the abdication of human reason and justice; it is the most decisive denial of human freedom, and leads necessarily to the enslaving of humanity, both in theory and practice. . . . The freedom of man

consists solely in following natural laws, because he has recognised them himself as such, and not because they are imposed upon him from without by the will of another, whether divine or human, collective or individual. . . . We reject all legislation, every authority, and every privileged, recognised official and legal influence, even if it has proceeded from the exercise of universal suffrage, since it could only benefit a ruling and exploiting minority against the interests of the great enslaved majority." And so forth.

Here already, in this partial repetition of Proudhon's views, we see Bakunin go far beyond Proudhon in an essential point, the question of universal suffrage. Proudhon had already perceived in "the organisation of universal suffrage" the only possible means of realising his views. Bakunin rejects this view, and, as will be shown later, this question formed the chief stumbling-block in his differences with the "International." But in a much more important and decisive point Bakunin goes farther than Proudhon, or rather sinks behind him.

Proudhon always based all his hopes on the diffusion of knowledge; the democracy was to be changed into a democracy, and thus gradually led up to Anarchy of its own accord. Bakunin anathematises knowledge just as much as religion; for it also enslaves men. "What I preach," he says in the book quoted, "is to a certain extent the revolt of life against knowledge, or rather against the domination of knowledge, not in order to do away with knowledge—that would be a crime of high treason against

humanity (*læsæ humanitatis*)—but in order to bring it back to its place so surely that it would never leave it again. . . . The only vocation of knowledge is to illuminate our path; life alone, in its full activity, can *create*, when freed from all fetters of dominion and doctrine.” He also thinks that knowledge should become the common possession of all, but to the question as to whether men should, until this takes place, follow the directions of knowledge, he answers at once, “No, not at all.”

In these two divergences from Proudhon lies the essential difference between the modern and the older Anarchism. Bakunin rejects the proposal to bring about Anarchy gradually by a process of political transformation by means of the use of universal suffrage, equally with the gradual education of mankind up to this form of society by knowledge. Not by evolution, but by revolt, revolution, and similar means is Anarchy to be installed to-day—Anarchy in the sense of the setting free of all those elements which we now include under the name of evil qualities, and the annihilation of all that is termed “public order.” Everything else will look after itself.

Bakunin wisely did not enter into descriptions of the future: “All talk about the future is criminal, for it hinders pure destruction, and steers the course of revolution.” His views as to the nearest goal, after general expropriation and the annihilation of all powers, are almost exclusively derived from Proudhon’s, and at most go beyond them only in so far as Bakunin does not recognise as obligatory

that coalescence of "productive" groups into a higher collective entity, which Proudhon regarded as an organic society, but merely allows them to remain as groups. If several such local groups wish to unite into a larger association, this might be done, but no compulsion must thereby be exercised upon individuals. The influence of Stirner, with whom Bakunin was acquainted before 1840, must account for this. We recognise Bakunin's theory best and most authentically from the following extract, in which he comprises it in the programme of the "Alliance de la Democratie Socialiste" of Geneva,¹ founded by himself. It runs thus:

1. The alliance professes atheism; it aims at the abolition of religious services; the replacement of belief by knowledge, and divine by human justice; and the abolition of marriage as a political, religious, judicial, and civic arrangement.

2. Before all it aims at the definite and complete abolition of all classes, and the political, economic, and social equality of the individual, of either sex; and to attain this end it demands, before all, the abolition of inheritance, in order that for the future usufruct may depend on what each produces, and that, in accordance with the decision of the last Congress of Workmen at Brussels [in 1868], the land, the instruments of production, as well as all other capital, can only be used by the workers, *i. e.*, by the agricultural and industrial communities.

3. It demands for all children of both sexes, from their birth onwards, equality of the means of devel-

¹ Compare the chapter on "The Spread of Anarchy."

opment, education, and instruction in all stages of knowledge, industry, and art, with the general object that this equality, at first only economic and social, will ultimately result in producing more and more a greater natural equality of individuals, by causing to disappear all those artificial inequalities which are the historic products of a social organisation which is as false as it is unjust.

4. As an enemy of all despotism, recognising no other form of policy than Republicanism, and rejecting unconditionally every reactionary alliance, it rejects all political action that does not aim directly and immediately at the triumph of the cause of labour against capital.

5. It recognises that all existing political States, having authority, by gradually confining themselves to merely administrative functions of the public service in their respective countries, will be immersed into the universal union of free associations, both agricultural and industrial.

6. Since the social question can only be solved, definitely and effectively, on the basis of the universal and international solidarity of the workmen of all countries, the alliance rejects any policy founded on so-called patriotism and the rivalry of nations.

7. It desires the universal association of all local associations by means of freedom.¹ The question as to how this Anarchist condition of society, which Bakunin himself described as "amorphism," was to be brought about has been answered in no dubious

¹ Testut Oscar, *Die Internationale, ihr Wesen und ihre Bestrebungen*.

fashion by Bakunin and his adherents in deeds of violence, such as that attempted by the leader himself in the Lyons riot of 1870 and the occurrences in Spain in 1873.¹ Bakunin tried to deceive himself into thinking that he deplored the violence that was sometimes necessary, and wrapped himself in the protecting cloak of the believer in evolution, who would wake up some fine morning and find that Anarchy had become an accomplished fact. By passive resistance in politics and economics, by complete abstention from politics, and by a "universal strike," Anarchy would suddenly come into being of itself. At the proper time all the workmen of every industry of a country, or indeed of the whole world, would stop work, and thereby, in at most a month, would compel the "possessing" classes either to enter voluntarily into a new form of social order, or else to fire upon the workmen, and thus give them the right to defend themselves, and at this opportunity to upset entirely the whole of the old order of society. Again we see that force is the ultimate resort; nor could it be otherwise after Bakunin had uncompromisingly rejected every attempt to arrive gradually at his ideal end by means of political and intellectual progress. In the *Letter to a Frenchman* he confesses the true character of the revolution which he advocates:

"Of course matters will not be settled quite peacefully at first," he says; "there will be battles;

¹ Friedrich Engels, *Die Bakunisten an der Arbeit*, Denkschrift über den Aufstand in Spanien im Winter, 1873; reprinted in *Internationales aus dem Volkstaate* (1871-75), Berlin, 1894.

public order, the sacred *arche* of the bourgeois, will be disturbed, and the first facts that will emerge from such a state of affairs can only end in what people like to call a civil war. For the rest, do not be afraid that the peasants will mutually devour each other; even if they attempt to do so at first, it will not be long before they are convinced of the obvious impossibility of continuing in this way, and then we may be certain that they will attempt to unite among themselves, to agree and to organise. The need of food and of feeding their families, and (as a consequence of this) of protecting their houses, family, and their own life against unforeseen attacks—all this will compel them to enter upon the path of mutual adjustment. Nor need we believe, either, that in this adjustment, that has been come to without any public guardianship of the State, the strongest and richest will exert a preponderating influence by the mere force of circumstances. The wealth of the rich will cease to be a power as soon as it is no longer secured by legal arrangements. As to the strongest and most cunning, they will be rendered harmless by the collective power of the multitude of small and very small peasants: so, too, in the case of the rural proletariat, who are to-day merely a multitude given over to dumb misery, but who will be provided by the revolutionary movement with an irresistible power. I do not assert that the rural districts that will thus have to reorganise themselves from top to bottom will create all at once an ideal organisation which will in all respects correspond to our dreams. But of this I am convinced, that it will be a living

organisation, and, as such, a thousand times superior to that which now exists. Besides, this new organisation, since it is always open to the propaganda of the towns, and can no longer be fettered and so to speak petrified by the legal sanctions of the State, will advance freely and develop and improve itself, in ways that are uncertain, yet always with life and freedom, and never merely by decrees and laws, till it reaches a standpoint that is as rational as we could possibly hope at the present day."

Bakunin has expressly excepted secret societies and plots from the means of bringing about this revolution. But this did not hinder him from becoming himself, as occasion suited, the head of a secret society, formed according to all the rules of the conspirator's art.

Fundamentally opposed as our minds must be to men like Proudhon and Stirner, we yet readily recognise in them their undoubted personal talents, both of mind, spirit, and character, and, above all, have never questioned their good faith. But we cannot speak thus of Bakunin. In all the changes and chances of a life that was singularly rich in change, there were far too many dark points, to which evil report had ample opportunity to attach itself. We do not see in Bakunin that proletarian in wooden sabots and blouse, with the eager thirst for knowledge and keen desire to raise himself, who dreams as he works before the compositor's frame of a juster order of things in this world, yet more for others than for himself, and would like to arrange society itself laboriously in a well-ordered composi-

tor's case; nor do we see in Bakunin that plain German schoolmaster who would people society with mere sons of Prometheus, while he himself totters starving to the grave; who dedicates his gospel of a doctrine that would overthrow the world from pole to pole "to his Darling, Marie Donhardt," as though it were a tender love-song. Bakunin remains to us for ever as the commercial traveller of eternal revolution in a magnificent pose, and from the red cloak so picturesquely cast around him peeps out unpleasantly the dagger of Caserio.

We cannot leave Bakunin without a passing mention of his favourite pupil Sergei Netschajew,¹ although he was still less of a pure Anarchist than Bakunin, and can still less easily be separated from Russian Nihilism.

But a picture of this pair of twin brothers will show us better than long essays how much of the total phenomenon of modern Anarchism is a product of Western hyper-philosophy, and how much is an inheritance of Russian Nihilism. Sergei Netschajew, the apostle and saint of Nihilist poesy, was born at

¹ For Netschajew, *cf.* the article "Anarchism" in Wurm's *Volkslexicon*, vol. i., and in the *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, Jena, 1890, vol. i.; also E. von Laveleye, *Socialism of the Present* (German ed. by Ch. Jasper, Halle, A.D. S., 1895). All these, however, are based almost exclusively on the information in the memoir, *L'Alliance de la Démocratie Socialiste et l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs*: Report and documents published by order of the International Congress at The Hague (London and Hamburg, 1873) — a very one-sided party brochure of the Marxists against the Bakuninists, which has been proved wrong on more points than one. We regret all the more that we are limited to this source of information.

St. Petersburg in 1846, the son of a court official, and in time became teacher at a parish school in his native town. In 1865 he went to Moscow, where he became associated with the students of the Academy of Agriculture, and founded a secret society that called itself "The People's Tribunal," and formed ostensibly the "Russian Branch of the International Workers' Union." Both in St. Petersburg and elsewhere he appeared as the founder of such branch societies, attached to the Bakuninist section of the "International," and chiefly recruited from the ranks of youthful students. In a pamphlet issued later (1869), in conjunction with his master, Bakunin, called *Words Addressed to Students*, he exhorted the students not to trouble about this "empty knowledge" in whose name it was meant to bind their hands, but to leave the University and go among the people.¹ The Russian people, he said, were now in the same condition as in the time of Alexis, the father of Peter the Great, when Stenka Razin, a robber chieftain, placed himself at the head of a terrible insurrection. The young people who now leave their place in society and lead the life of the people would form an invincible, collective Stenka Razin, who would put themselves at the head of the fight for emancipation, and carry it through successfully. For this purpose they should not merely turn to the peasants and make them revolt, but also call in the help of robbers. "Robbery," he said, "was one of the most honourable

¹ The expression "go among the people" has since become a well-known Nihilist term.

forms of Russian national life." The robber is a hero, the protector and avenger of the people, the irreconcilable enemy of the State, and of all civic and social order founded by the State, who fights to the death against all this civilisation of officials, nobles, priests, and the crown. The Russian robber is the true and only revolutionary, the revolutionary *sans phrase*, without rhetoric derived from books, indefatigable, irreconcilable, and in action irresistible, a social revolutionary of the people, not a political revolutionary of the classes.

This was the programme of the society called "The People's Tribunal," as it was that of Nihilism generally, and, transferred from this into Western conditions, became the active programme of the "propaganda of action." At the same time as the *Words*, there were circulating in the circles influenced by Netschajew other writings, either written exclusively by himself or in conjunction with Bakunin, such as the *Formula of the Revolutionary Question*, the *Principles of Revolution*, the *Publications of the the People's Tribunal*,—all of which preached "total destruction" and Anarchism. The opponents of the Bakuninists maintain that the only purpose of these writings was, by their bloodthirsty tone, to compromise genuine revolutionaries, and give the police a weapon against them. But the whole spirit of Bakunin is expressed in the revolutionary *Catechism*,¹ first made accessible to the public in the trial

¹ The *Catechism* is reproduced in the before-mentioned memoir, *L'Alliance de la Démocratie Socialiste*, viii. (*L'Alliance en Russie et le Catéchisme Révolutionnaire*), pp. 90-95.

of Netschajew. It was formerly thought that Bakunin was the author, but now it is pretty well agreed that it was Netschajew.

The catechism, a condensation of revolutionary fanaticism, commands the revolutionary to break with all that is dear to him, and, troubling nought about law or morality, family or State, joy or sorrow, to devote himself wholly to his task of total *bouleversement*. "If he continues to live in this world, it is only in order to annihilate it all the more surely. A revolutionary despises everything *doctrinaire*, and renounces the science and knowledge of this world in order to leave it to future generations; he knows but one science: that of destruction. For that, and that only, he studies mechanics, physics, chemistry, and even medicine. For the same purpose he studies day and night living science—men, their character, positions, and all the conditions of the existing social order in all imaginary spheres. The object remains always the same: the quickest and most effective way possible of destroying the existing order" (§§ 2, 3). "For him exists only one pleasure, one consolation, one reward, one satisfaction, the reward of revolution. Day and night he must have but one thought—inexorable destruction" (§ 6). "For the purpose of irrevocable destruction a revolutionary can, and may, often live in the midst of society and appear to have the most complete indifference as to his surroundings. A revolutionary may penetrate everywhere, into high society, among the nobility, among shopkeepers, into the military, official, or literary world,

into the ' third section ' [the secret police], and even into the Imperial palace " (§ 14). The catechism divides society into several categories: those in the first of these categories are condemned to death without delay. " In the first place we must put out of the world those who stand most in the way of the revolutionary organisation and its work " (§ 16). The members of the second category are to be allowed to live " provisionally," in order that, " by a series of abominable deeds they may drive the people into unceasing revolt " (§ 17). The third class, the rich and influential, must be exploited for the sake of the revolution, and made to become " our slaves." With the fourth class, Liberals of various shades of opinion, arrangements must be made on the basis of their programme, they must be initiated and compromised, and made use of for the perturbation of the State. The fifth class, the doctrinaires, must be urged forward; while the sixth and most important class consists of the women, for making use of whom for the purposes of the revolution Netschajew gives explicit directions. It is the tactics of the Jesuits in all their details that are here recommended for the inauguration of the most moral ordering of the universe. The last section of the catechism, which treats of the duty of the People's Tribunal Society towards the people, reads: " The Society has no other purpose but the complete emancipation and happiness of the people, *i. e.*, of hardworking humanity. But proceeding from the conviction that this emancipation and this happiness can only be reached by means of an all-

destroying popular revolution, the Society will use every effort and every means to heighten and increase the evils and sorrows which at length will wear out the patience of the people and encourage an insurrection *en masse*. By a popular revolution the Society does not mean a movement regulated according to the classic patterns of the West, which is always restrained in face of property and of the traditional social order of so-called civilisation and morality, and which has hitherto been limited merely to exchanging one form of politics for another, and at most to founding a so-called revolutionary State. The only revolution that can do any good to the people is that which utterly annihilates every political idea. With this end in view, the People's Tribunal has no intention of imposing on the people an organisation coming from above. The future organisation will, without doubt, proceed from the movement and life of the people; but that is the business of future generations. Our task is terrible, inexorable, and universal destruction."

The views thus expressed are quite in harmony with what Netschajew has written about revolutionary action in the writings mentioned above. "Words," he exclaims, "have no value for us, unless followed at once by action. But all is not action that is so-called: for example, the modest and too-cautious organisation of secret societies without external announcements to outsiders is in our eyes merely ridiculous and intolerable child's-play. By external announcements we mean a series of actions that positively destroy something—a

person, a cause, a condition that hinders the emancipation of the people. Without sparing our lives, we must break into the life of the people with a series of rash, even senseless, actions, and inspire them with a belief in their powers, awake them, unite them, and lead them on to the triumph of their cause."

The tendency which here develops into the recommendation of violence should be carefully noticed; outrage is no longer recommended, because the purposes of revolution can be served thereby directly, but indirectly, as a kind of sanguinary advertisement to the indolent masses, who would thus have their attention drawn to the theory by such terrible events. That is the diabolical basis of the "propaganda of action," which was defined by another follower of Bakunin—Paul Brousse, the man of the Jura Federation (see the chapter on "The Spread of Anarchy"). "Deeds," says Brousse, "are talked of on all sides; the indifferent masses inquire about their origin, and thus pay attention to the new doctrine, and discuss it. Let men once get as far as this, and it is not hard to win over many of them." Therefore he recommended revolution and outrage, not in order to upset existing society thereby, but for the purpose of the "propaganda." Brousse only had to borrow the thought, as we see, from Netschajew; and it is not difficult to say whence the latter got it. The opinion which ascribes the authorship of the *Catechism of Revolution*, and of the other writings above mentioned not to Netschajew but to Bakunin himself, has perhaps

some foundation. But it matters little who is the author of these works. Netschajew is thoroughly imbued with his master's spirit, and he might even say to him (p. 115):

“ . . . What thou hast thought in thy mind
That I do, that I perform.

And e'en though years may pass away
I never rest, until to fact
Is changed the word that thou did'st say,
'T is thine to think and mine to act.

Thou art the judge, the headsman I ;
And as a servant I obey ;
The sentence which thou dost imply,
E'en though unjust, I never stay.

In ancient Rome, a lictor dark
An axe before the consul bore ;
Thou hast a lictor too, but mark !
The axe comes after, not before.

I am thy lictor ; and alway
With bare, bright axe behind thee tread ;
I am the deed, be what it may,
Begotten from thy thought unsaid.”

In the year 1869 a sudden end was put to Netschajew's activity in Russia. Among his most trusted friends in Moscow was a certain Iwanow, one of the most respected and influential members of the secret society. Iwanow himself lived in ascetic seclusion, and in his leisure time gave the peasants instruction gratis, establishing classes of poor students, and so forth. He was a fanatic in his belief in the social revolution. He had also established cheap eating-

houses for poor students, and one day these were closed by the police, and their founder vanished, because Netschajew had placarded revolutionary appeals in them. In despair at this, Iwanow wished to retire from the secret society. Netschajew, believing that he might betray its secrets, enticed Iwanow one evening into a remote garden, and with the help of two fellow-conspirators, Pryow and Nicolajew, shot him, and threw the corpse into a pond. He then fled, and arrived safely in Switzerland, where, in conjunction with Bakunin, he produced the literary efforts referred to above. Soon, however, he quarrelled with Bakunin, owing to certain sharp practices of which he was guilty, went to London, edited a paper called *The Commonwealth* (*Die Gemeinde*), in which he bitterly attacked his former master, and at last, in 1872, was handed over to Russia at the request of the Russian Government. Since then nothing more was heard of him; Netschajew disappeared, like the demon in a pantomime, "down below."





CHAPTER V

PETER KROPOTKIN AND HIS SCHOOL

Biography—Kropotkin's Main Views—Anarchist Communism and the "Economics of the Heap" (*tas*)—Kropotkin's Relation to the Propaganda of Action—Elisée Reclus: his Character and Anarchist Writings—Jean Grave—Daniel Saurin's *Order through Anarchy*—Louise Michel and G. Eliéviant—A. Hamon and the Psychology of Anarchism—Charles Malato and other French Writers on Anarchist Communism—The Italians: Cafiero, Merlino, and Malatesta.

"Seek not to found your comfort and freedom on the servitude of another; so long as you rule others, you will never be free yourself. Increase your power of production by studying nature; your powers will grow a thousandfold, if you put them at the service of Humanity. Free the individual: for without the freedom of the individual, it is impossible for society to become free. If you wish to emancipate yourselves, set not your hope on any help from this life or the next: help yourselves! Next you must free yourselves from all your religious and political prejudices. Be free men and trust the nature of a free man: all his faults proceed from the power which he exercises over his own kind or under which he groans."—P. KROPOTKIN.



NE more Russian, a *déclassé*, as Bakunin was, has exercised considerable influence on the development of modern Anarchism; and, in fact, although he has introduced but few new doctrines into it, has made, in the truest sense, a school of his own. Kropotkin, is regarded every-

where as the father of "Anarchist Communism," which is, to some extent, directly opposed both to the collectivist and evolutionist Anarchism of Proudhon and to the other philosophic and individual Anarchism of Stirner. In future we must carefully discriminate between these two directions of individual and communal Anarchism; moreover they are sharply distinguished not only in their intellectual but also their actual form. The former tendency seems more adapted to the Teutonic races in Germany, England, and America, whilst the Anarchists of the Romance nations, but especially the French, are devoted to the latter—the communist doctrine of Kropotkin.

Peter Alexandriewitsch Kropotkin is a descendant of the royal house of the Ruriks, and it used to be said in jest in the revolutionary circles of St. Petersburg that he had more right to the Russian throne than the Czar Alexander II., who was only a German. Born at Moscow in 1842, he was first a page at court, then an officer in the Amur Cossacks, and next, Chamberlain to the Czarina. In this atmosphere grew up the man who is now developing a perfectly feverish activity not only in the realm of intellect and science, but also in propaganda of the most destructive character. Prince Kropotkin studied mathematics in his youth at the High School, and during his extensive travels, which led him to Siberia and even to China, acquired a great knowledge of geography. The dreaded Anarchist is and has always been active as a writer of geographical and geological works, and enjoys a con-

siderable reputation in these sciences, apart from his activity as a Socialist teacher and agitator. During a journey to Switzerland and Belgium in the year 1872, Prince Kropotkin became more closely connected with the "International," and especially with men of Bakunin's school; and so shortly as a year later we find him in his native land compromised and arrested because of Nihilist intrigues. He spent three years as a prisoner in the fortress of SS. Peter and Paul, where, however, he was allowed to pursue his scientific studies.¹ In the year 1876 he succeeded in escaping from there and reaching Switzerland. Here Kropotkin devoted himself to a feverish activity in the service of the new doctrines by which he is known. In Geneva he immediately joined the leaders of the Anarchist agitation known as the "Jurassic Union" (see the chapter on the "Spread of Anarchy"), founded the paper *Révolt*, and greatly assisted in extending the Union so widely in Switzerland and the South of France. After a short stay in England we find him at the beginning of the eighties in France, busy here and there with the founding of "groups," delivery of lectures, and so forth. In the sensational Anarchist trial at Lyons in 1883 he was also involved, and was condemned to five years' imprisonment upon his own confession of having been the "intellectual instigator" of the bloody demonstrations and riots at Montceau-les-Mines and Lyons in 1882. Kropotkin was, however, set free after only three years' imprisonment, and betook himself

¹ See his life in Stepniak, *u. s.*, pp. 90-101.

to London, where he has lived till recently.¹ But the more watchful supervision of Anarchists that has been exercised since the murder of President Sadi Carnot, appears to have disgusted him with London, for his present place of abode is not known.

Kropotkin's Anarchism rests upon the most scientific and humane foundations, and yet assumes the most unscientific and brutal forms. To him the Anarchist theory appears to be nothing but a necessary adaptation of social science to that modern tendency in all other sciences which, leaving on one side abstract and collective generality, turn to the individual, as, *e.g.*, the cellular theory, the study of molecular forces, and so on. Just as all great discoveries of modern science have proceeded by rejecting the unfruitful deductive method and beginning to build up from below, so also, Kropotkin maintains, society must be built up afresh by realising all power, all reality, all purpose in individuals, and can only arise again new-born synthetically, from the free grouping of these individuals. With unconscious self-irony, Kropotkin remarks that he would like to call this system the "synthetic," if Herbert Spencer had not already applied that name "to another system." Anyone who would conclude from this that the learned prince would build up scientifically a well-founded system, as his earlier predecessors tried to do, would be mistaken. With a few exceptions, Kropotkin has only published short works, though certainly numerous, in which he uses epithets rather than arguments, and

¹ He was living in Kent in 1897.—TRANS.

those in an intentionally trivial tone; indeed he sometimes mocks at the "wise and learned theorists," and regards one deed as worth more than a thousand books.¹ The same internal contrast is seen in him in another direction. He is apparently a philanthropist of the purest water, wishing to see the foundation of an universal brotherhood of humanity, based upon what he regards as the innate feeling of solidarity in man; we seem to see in this Proudhon's "justice," Comte's "love," in short, the moral order of the world, however materialist Kropotkin may be in action, and however much he may deny all moral element therein. But how does he mean to bring about this moral order? By any means that is suitable, even by the sanguinary "propaganda of action," and finally by the re-establishment of the actual conditions of the primeval ape-man, or tribal life on the level of the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego.

¹ The chief work of Kropotkin is *La Conquête du Pain*, Paris, 1892. (The chapter on agriculture was printed separately as a pamphlet in 1892.) We quote below his numerous smaller writings in the editions which we possess, without vouching for the chronological order or completeness of the list. *Les Paroles d'un Révolté*, 1885; *Revolutionary Governments* (trans. from German to French, Anarchist Library, vol. i.); *Un Siècle d'Attente*, 1789-1889, Paris, 1893; *La Grande Révolution*, Paris, 1893; *Les Temps Nouveaux* (conference at London), Paris, 1894; *Jeunes Gens*, 4th ed., Paris, '93; *La Loi et l'Autorité*, 6th ed., Paris, '92; *Les Prisons*, 2d ed., Paris, '90; *L'Anarchie dans l'Évolution Socialiste*, 2d ed., Paris, '92; *Esprit de Révolte*, Paris, '92, 5th ed.; *le Salariat*, 2d ed., Paris, '92; *La Morale Anarchiste*, 1890; "Anarchist Communion: its Basis and Principles" (republished by permission of the editor of the *Nineteenth Century*), London, 1887.

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For Kropotkin Anarchy consists in (1) the liberation of the producer from the yoke of capital, in production in common, and the free enjoyment of all products of common work; (2) in freedom from any yoke of government, in the free development of individuals in groups, of groups in federations, in free organisation rising from the simple to the complex according to men's needs and mutual endeavours; and (3) in liberation from religious morality, and a free morality without duty or sanctions proceeding and becoming customary from the life of the community itself.¹

The postulate of the abolition of the authority of the State is the well-known, old stock proposal of the Anarchists. But it is noticeable that Kropotkin attacks the State among other things, because it does not carry out the maxim of *laissez faire* so often imposed upon it by another party. Kropotkin thinks that the State acts rather on the principle of *not laissez faire*, and is always intervening in favour of the exploiter as against the exploited (*Les Temps Nouveaux*, p. 46). The State is accordingly a purely civic idea (*l'idée bourgeoise*), utterly rotten and decaying, only held together by the plague of laws. All law and dominion, including parliamentary government, must therefore be put aside, and be replaced by the "system of no government" and free arrangement (*la libre entente*). Kropotkin sees everywhere already, even at present in public, and especially in economic life, germs of this free understanding or *entente*, in

¹ *L'Anarchie*, p. 26.

which government never intervenes; what, for example, in isolated cases two railway companies do in making a free arrangement about fares and timetables, is to be the universal form of society.

In this society the feeling of solidarity alone, which Kropotkin assumes as a sort of *à priori* axiom of society, will determine men's actions: "Each must retain the right of acting as he thinks best, and the right of society to punish any one for a social action in any way must be denied. . . ." "We are not afraid of doing without judges and their verdicts," says he, in *La Morale Anarchiste*. "With Guyon we renounce each and every approval of morality or any duties to morality. We do not shrink from saying: Do what pleases you! Act as you think fit! for we are convinced that the great majority of mankind, in proportion to their enlightenment and to the completeness with which they throw off their present fetters, will always act in a manner beneficial to society—just as we are certain that some day or other a child will walk upon its two feet and not on all fours, because it is born of parents that belong to the genus *homo*." But the comparison is incorrect. There are, as a matter of fact, degenerate children of human kind who, deprived of all understanding, creep on all fours quite unconcernedly. Equally insufficient is another proof adduced by Kropotkin, who is a great friend of animals, from the animal world. Looking around among animals, he finds in them also an innate feeling of sympathy with their own species, expressed in mutual assistance in time of need or danger.

By this he wishes to prove that men likewise would act in the same way to their fellow-men merely from the feeling of solidarity, and without laws or government. Elsewhere certainly, in a later work, he has to confess that there are among men an enormous number of individuals who do not understand that the welfare of the individual is identical with that of the race. But supposing that man were exactly like the animals, then—speaking in Kropotkin's manner—he would stand no higher in morality than they. But then do we really find that, in the animal world, the number of cases in which they act from a feeling of solidarity is greater than those in which they simply make use of brute force or blind want of forethought, and have animals the sense to do away with organised solidarity, the State, in order to replace it by something unorganised and consequently less valuable ?

But Prince Kropotkin, who appears to be such a stern materialist, is a very enthusiast, who gives way to utter self-deception as to human nature. " We do not want to be governed ! " he says ; " and do we not thereby declare that we ourselves wish to rule no one ? We do not wish to be deceived ; we always would hear nothing but the truth. Do we not declare by this that we ourselves wish to deceive no one, and that we promise to speak always the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth ? " Who can fail to recognise here the exact opposite to the real facts of the case ? The Anarchists, and especially those who acknowledge Kropotkin as their highest " authority," do not wish force used against

them, yet use it themselves; they do not wish to be killed, and yet kill others. Can there be a stronger refutation of Anarchist morality?

Kropotkin has finally broken with the Communism of Proudhon, and placed Anarchist Communism in its stead. Proudhon, and, to a certain extent, Bakunin also—who always called himself a Collectivist, and repelled the charge of Communism¹—certainly attacked property as *rente* or profit derived from the appropriation of the forces of nature; but they have also not only not denied the right to individual possession of property, but even sought to make it general. Everyone should become a possessor of property; only land and the means of labour, which must be accessible to all, may not be appropriated; they are collective property, and are applied to

¹ At the Peace Congress at Bern in 1869, Bakunin defended himself against the reproach of Communist tendencies, saying: "I abominate Communism, because it is a denial of freedom, and I cannot understand anything human without freedom. I am no Communist, because Communism concentrates all the forces of society in the State, and lets them be absorbed by it, because it necessarily results in the centralisation of property in the hands of the State; whereas I wish to do away with the State, to utterly root out the principle of the authority and guardianship of the State, which, under the pretence of improving and idealising men, has hitherto enslaved, oppressed, exploited, and ruined them. I wish for the organisation of society and of collective and social property from below upwards, by means of free association, and not from above downwards by means of authority, be it what it may. In demanding the abolition of the State, I mean to abolish the inheritance of property by an individual, *i. e.*, of property that is only a matter of the State's arrangement, and is only a consequence of the principle of the State itself. In this sense I am a Collectivist and by no means a Communist."

employment in a proportion equal to the quotient of the amount of land at disposal, or the means of production on the one hand and the number of members of free "groups" on the other. We have already seen to what a complicated organisation of economic life this led in the case of Proudhon's theory; but he did not entrust the maintenance of this economic order to the strong hand of the State, but believed that life, when once brought into equilibrium or "balance," could never fall away from it again. We will not repeat here what an illusion is contained in this. Collectivism left to itself must degenerate again at once into a state of economic inequality, and accordingly those Collectivists who make the maintenance of economic equilibrium the business of the State, possess at least the merit of consistency. But then the very foundation idea of Anarchism is hereby lost.

This irreconcilable contradiction between Anarchism and Collectivism decided Kropotkin to give up the latter entirely, and to set up in its stead Anarchist Communism, thus attaching himself to the lines already indicated by Hess and Grün. He criticised unsparingly (in *La Conquête du Pain* and *Le Salarial*) every system of reward or wages, whether based on Saint-Simon's principle of "To each according to his capacity, and to every capacity according to its results"; or on Proudhon's rule, "to each according to his powers, to each according to his needs." With the reward of labour he rejects the period of labour, possession even in the form of Collective possession, and also the payment

of labour (*les bons du travail*), equally with other forms of property, capital, or exploitation. He even attacks the theory of the full result of labour that ought to accrue to every labourer, this most stalwart hobby-horse of Socialism. "It would mean the annihilation of the race," he says, "if the mother would not sacrifice her life to save the life of her children; if man would not give where he could expect no recompense."

Kropotkin's motto, that has been so eagerly accepted by the Anarchists of Romance nationality, is on the contrary: "Everything belongs to all," *tout est à tous*; i. e., no one is any longer a possessor; if after the Revolution all goods and property were expropriated and given back to the community, then everybody would take what he pleased, according to his needs. Anyone might just as well appropriate the land as another object or commodity. "Heap together all the means of life, and let them be divided according to each man's need," he cries¹; "let each choose freely from this heap everything of which there is a superfluity, and let only those commodities be divided of which there might be some lack. That is a solution of the problem according to the wish of the people." Again, "free choice from the heap in all means of life that are abundant, proper division (*rationnement*) of all those things the production of which is limited; division according to needs, with special regard to children, old people, and the weak generally. The enjoyment of all this not in a social feeding-institu-

¹ In *Anarchy*, p. 13.

tion (*dans la marmite sociale*), but at home in the family circle with our friends, according to the taste of the individual, that is the ideal of the masses, whose mouthpiece we are."

It is interesting to see how all attempts to do away with individual property come back again at once in thought to that same property, and in opposition Proudhon might on this basis write a very pretty retort to *What is Property?* Kropotkin wishes first of all a general expropriation, and then each person is to have what he likes. But what is the use of an expropriation, which only means one thing, if a division to all is to follow it? Would it not be simpler as the inauguration of Anarchist Communism, to do away with the guarantee of property at once, and then to watch quietly and see how individuals deprived each other of their possessions? The result would be just the same, but there is a well-understood contradiction in first declaring all property as a common possession—in which the reality of society which Kropotkin denies is thereby recognised—and then giving to each person the right to dispose as he pleases of everything. Stirner was at least logical when he declared: "All belongs to me!" As a matter of fact the statements, "All belongs to me," "All belongs to all," "Nothing belongs to me," and "Nothing belongs to all," are perfectly identical. The difference between all these conceptions of property according to the principles of individualist or Communist Anarchism, and the relations of property as they exist to-day, merely reduces itself to this, that with us the State affords

the guarantee of property, while Anarchy, at most, places the guarantee of it in free association or agreement, proceeding from a "group" or a "union of egotists." Here we come face to face with the purely formal question of whether right is derived from convention or compulsion; but as regards individual property as such no alteration is thereby made.

But Kropotkin's "economics of the heap" (*la mise au tas, la prise au tas*) has another fault besides this matter of logic. Its talented inventor proceeds from two assumptions, which characterise him as a Utopian of the first water; on the one hand the old and incorrect assumption of the inexhaustible productivity of the earth, and on the other the assumption of the innate solidarity of mankind.

Kropotkin maintains that production now already outweighs consumption, and that the former is growing with unsuspected rapidity together with scientific insight into the methods of production and with freedom of production. A piece of land which to-day is cultivated by ten persons, and feeds one hundred, would with rational cultivation feed one thousand people, and with the general employment of machinery would only require five persons to cultivate it. In fact, diminution of labour, with increase of production under rational cultivation, is perhaps the quintessence of Kropotkin's argument. Men will then quickly leave the less productive countries to settle in the most suitable and most productive districts, and from these they will extract with proportionately little labour a never-ending superfluity, so

that the economic arrangement proposed by Kropotkin will become not only possible, but there will even be too much to distribute. Here again we have the Land of Idleness in the disguise of science, the millennium of the revolution. Let us listen to the description of this return to Paradise in Kropotkin's own words:

“ The workers will [after the Revolution] go away from the city and return to the country. With the help of machinery which will enable the weakest among us to support it, they will introduce the revolution into the methods of cultivation, as they had previously with the ideas and conditions, of those who were before but slaves. Here hundreds of acres will be covered with glass houses, and men and women will tend with gentle hands the young plants. Elsewhere hundreds of acres will be cleared and broken up by machinery worked by steam, improved by manures and enriched by phosphates. Laughing troops of workers will in due time cover these fields with seeds, guided in their work and in their experiments by those who understand agriculture, but all of them continually animated by the powerful and practical spirit of a people that has waked up from a long sleep and sees before it the happiness of all, that light-house of humanity shedding its rays afar. And in two or three months an early harvest will relieve their most pressing needs, and provide with food a people who after centuries of silent hope will at last be able to satisfy its hunger or eat as its appetite desires. Meanwhile the popular genius, the genius of a

people that is rising and knows its own requirements, will seek new means of production which only need the test of experiment in order to come into general use. Attempts will be made to concentrate light, that well-known factor in agriculture, which in the latitude of Yakutsk ripens barley in forty-five days, and to produce it artificially, and with light rival heat in promoting the growth of plants. Some genius of the future will invent an instrument to guide the rays of the sun, and compel them to do work without it being necessary to seek in the depths of the earth for the heat contained in coal. Efforts will be made to water the ground with solutions of minute organisms—an idea of yesterday that will make it possible to introduce into the ground the little living cells that are necessary for plants in order to feed the young roots, and to decompose the component parts of the earth, and make them fit to be assimilated.” Kropotkin adds, rendering criticism unnecessary: “We shall make experiments, but we need go no farther, for we should enter upon the realms of romance.”

We need not now consider whether the statement that production is already surpassing the capacity of consumption is really quite true; the vast majority of economists is of a different opinion. But even if it were so, and if production should further increase, Kropotkin himself admits that the necessary presupposition of abundant production is rational cultivation. But the first condition of such rational agriculture is fixed organisation. This condition is to-day fulfilled; but in Kropotkin's

scheme there would only be cultivation by robbery, and that invariably leads at last to want, and a lack of production. Kropotkin has seen this himself, for otherwise his proposal to distribute those products, the growth of which is limited, and of which there might be a lack, would be most superfluous; for in the land of lotus-eaters there is no want.

This admission that such a case might happen is, however, not only a relapse from the promised land of the future into the sober reality of to-day, but it is the negation of Anarchy. Where is the line to be drawn between the superfluous and the non-superfluous? Who is to draw it, and still more, who would recognise it? Who will undertake the distribution, and who will respect it? Every form of authority is abolished, and no one is pledged to anything. What if I simply refuse to recognise the limits made by the Commission of Distribution or to obey their decisions? Will anyone compel me? In that case Anarchy would be a fraud; but if I am allowed to do as I like, distribution is impossible and Communism a fraud.

From this dilemma Kropotkin has endeavoured to extricate himself, in the fashion of certain celebrated examples, by invoking a *deus ex machina*. Comte called it love, Proudhon justice, and Kropotkin calls it "the solidarity of the human race,"—three different words, but they imply one and the same thing: the moral order of the universe—a dogma which anyone may believe or not, as he likes. Kropotkin assures us that, when once the great revolution has taken place, human solidarity

will arise like a phœnix from the smoking ashes of the old order. We do not consider ourselves better or worse than other men, but we doubt very seriously whether we ourselves, if confronted on the one hand by want, and on the other by Kropotkin's famous "heap of commodities," would give up the chief necessities of life (and it is these in which want must first be felt, just because they are the most necessary) merely out of a feeling of solidarity with a man who next moment, if he is stronger than I, might turn me out of my house, kill me, or part with my books or pictures as if they were his own, with impunity. This sort of Communism would only be possible under the rule of a despotic authority, such as the social-democratic State of the future must inevitably possess; but it would never be possible for a *libre entente* of perfectly free individuals; "free" men in the Anarchist sense will never let themselves be made equal and never have done so.

But Kropotkin thinks otherwise. He goes back to those dear, good, and too happy savages of Rousseau, and tells us¹ that primitive peoples, so long as they submit to no authority but live in Anarchy, lead a most enviably happy life. "Apart from the occurrences of natural forces, such as sudden changes of weather, earthquakes, frost, etc., and apart from war and accidents, primitive races lead a rich and full life out of their own resources, following their own wishes, at the cost of the minimum of labour. Read the descriptions left by the great voyagers of

¹ *Les Temps Nouveaux*, p. 21.

early centuries, read certain modern records of travel, and you will see that where society has not yet sunk under the yoke of priests and warriors, plenty prevails among savages. Like gregarious birds they spend the morning in common labour; in the evening they rest in common and enjoy themselves. They have none of the troubles of life known to the proletariat in the great centres of industry of our time. Misery only overtakes them when they fall under the yoke of some form of authority."

Here we have the golden age existing before any form of society, just as previously we heard the description of a golden age after the fall of forms of society, and that the misery of this "cursed civilisation" can only be removed by doing away with such a society and returning again to the same primitive condition. It is the same old tale of the "social-contract" theory to which our Anarchists one and all invariably recur after manifold scientific toil and trouble. In fact this primitive paradise described by Kropotkin is just as much a figment of his imagination as the Anarchist paradise of the future. He speaks of early travellers. Now, as regards the ethnographic observations of old travellers, they are a very doubtful source of information. Formerly it was frequently declared off-hand that this or that people had no idea of religion or lived in Anarchy. The reason was that travellers completely underrated primitive forms in comparison with their own preconceived religious or political ideas and regarded them as naught. Exact ob-

servations have shown that a complete lack of all religious conceptions is as rare in primitive races as complete lack of all social organisation or form of authority. Kropotkin unfortunately does not mention the "certain new travellers" in whose books he has read those descriptions of the happy state of primitive peoples produced by Anarchy. As far as we know, Anarchy in the proper sense can only be stated of a very small number of races like the Tierra del Fuegians, the Eskimos, etc.; but the life of these people is, to their disadvantage, exceedingly different from the fancied paradise of Kropotkin. If we read the unanimous descriptions given by Fitzroy, Darwin, Topinard, and others about the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego, we shall very quickly abjure our belief—if we ever held it—that they lead such an Eden-like existence as Kropotkin's Anarchist savages. We find, rather, misery and hunger as permanent conditions, that appear here as consequences of Anarchy, and the blame cannot be laid entirely upon the lack of fertility of the soil. Narborough¹ says of the Tierra del Fuegians: "If any desire for civilisation arose, the forests that cover the country would not be an obstacle thereto, for in many parts there appear open, grassy spots, which are frequently regarded by seamen as the remnants of attempts at agriculture by the Spaniards." But in general the statements of all travellers and ethnographers agree in showing that the existence of these so-called "savages" is

¹ Quoted in Ratzel's *F. Völkerkunde*, vol. ii., p. 668. Leipsic and Vienna, 1890.

a continual and bitter struggle against nature and against each other for the barest necessities of life, and that if hunger is not a constant guest, their mode of living is a very irregular alternation between surfeit and prolonged fast. How difficult it is to rear children among these primitive people and even among others more advanced in civilisation is proved by the terrible custom, common to all parts of the globe, of infanticide, which has no other object than artificial selection for breeding in view of the harsh conditions of existence. Persons who are regarded by the community only as mouths to feed and not as actual workers, the old and weak, are simply killed off by many races—even by those who, in other respects, do not stand upon a low level; and the murder of the parents and the aged appears to be as widespread among primitive races as infanticide. But these are facts which not only contradict the Anarchist assumption of a golden age of Anarchy, but still more contradict that of an innate feeling of solidarity in the human race.

A further remark remains to be made as to Kropotkin's attitude toward the "propaganda of action." It is often said that he rejects it. But that is quite contrary to the facts. In his *Psychology of Revolution* (*L'Esprit de Révolte*, p. 7) he takes up quite a decisive attitude in reply to the question how words must be translated into deeds: "The answer is easy," says he; "it is action, the continual, incessantly renewed action of the minority that will produce this transformation. Courage, devotion, self-sacrifice, are as contagious as coward-

ice, subjection, and terror. What forms is action to take? Any form—as different as are circumstances, means, and temperaments. Sometimes arousing sorrow, sometimes scorn, but always bold; sometimes isolated, sometimes in common, it despises no means ready to hand, it neglects no opportunity of public life to propagate discontent, and to clothe it in words, to arouse hatred against the exploiter, to make the ruling powers ridiculous, to show their weakness, and ever to excite audacity, the spirit of revolt, by the preaching of example. If a feeling of revolution awakes in a country, and the spirit of open revolt is already sufficiently alive among the masses to break out in tumultuous disorders in the streets, *émeutes* and risings,—then it is ‘action’ alone by which the minority can create this feeling of independence and that atmosphere of audacity without which no revolution can be completed. Men of courage who do not stop at words but seek to transform them into deeds, pure characters for whom the action and the idea are inseparable, who prefer prison, exile, or death, rather than a life not in accordance with their principles, fearless men, who know what must be risked in order to win success,—those are the devoted outposts who begin the battle long before the masses are sufficiently moved to unfurl the standard of insurrection, and to march sword in hand to the conquest of their rights. Amid complaints, speeches, theoretical discussions, an act of personal or general revolt takes place. It cannot be otherwise than that the great mass at first remains indifferent; those especially

who admire the courage of the person or group that took the initiative will apparently follow the wise and prudent in hastening to describe this act as folly, and in speaking of the fools and hot-headed people who compromise everything. These wise and prudent ones had fully calculated that their party, if it slowly pursued its objects, would perhaps have conquered the world in one, two, or three centuries, and now the unforeseen intrudes! The unforeseen is that which was not foreseen by the wise and prudent. But those who know history and can lay claim to any well-ordered reasoning power, however small, know quite well that a theoretical propaganda of revolution must necessarily be translated into action long before theorists have decided that the time for it has come. None the less the theorists are enraged with the 'fools' and excommunicate and ban them. But the fools find sympathy, the mass of the people secretly applaud their boldness, and they find imitators. In proportion as the first of them fill the prisons, others come forward to continue their work. The acts of illegal protest, of revolt, of revenge, increase. Indifference becomes impossible. Those who at first only asked what on earth the fools meant, are compelled to take them seriously, to discuss their ideas, and to take sides for or against. By acts which are done under the notice of the people, the new idea communicates itself to men's minds and finds adherents. One such act makes in a few days more proselytes than thousands of books."

This is precisely the view of the followers of Bak-

unin, only obscured and founded on a psychological basis.

Kropotkin forms the centre of a large number of Anarchist authors, who are working at the development or the popularising of Anarchist theory on the same lines as he is doing. From the mass of unimportant writers two rise up prominently, both essentially differing one from the other, Elisée Reclus, the savant, and Jean Grave, editor of the *Révolution*.

Jean Jacques Elisée Reclus¹ was born on March 15, 1830, at Ste. Foy la Grande, in the Gironde, the son of a Protestant minister. He was the eldest but one of twelve children, and early became acquainted with want and distress, a circumstance which, in conjunction with his warm and affectionate heart, sufficiently explains his later social views. Educated in Rhenish Prussia, he attended the Protestant Faculty at Montauban, in Southern France, and then the University of Berlin, where he studied geography under Ritter. At present Reclus is regarded as one of the best geographers, and is the author of the famous and much admired *Nouvelle Géographie Universelle*, in nineteen volumes, and of the great popular physical geography *La Terre*, which has also been translated into German. His student life and also his stay at Berlin coincided with the stormy period of the Revolution of 1848, and Reclus eagerly accepted the views of the

¹ Cf. Wolkenhauer, *Elisée Reclus* (*Globus*, vol. lxx., No. 8, Feb., 1894). Reclus's Anarchist writings are: *Produit de la Terre et de l'Industrie*, 1885; *Richesse et Misère*; *Évolution et Révolution*, 6th ed., Paris, 1891; and *À mon Frère le Paysan*, Geneva, 1894.

political and social Radicalism of that day. The *coup d'état* of December 2, 1851, compelled him to leave France; he fled to England, visited Ireland, and then from 1852 to 1857 travelled in the United States, North America, Central America, and Colombia. Returning to Paris, he devoted himself to a scientific arrangement of his studies during his travels, but at the same time took a more and more active part in the social and political movements of the day. Thus he was one of the first authors in France who eagerly supported the war of the Northern States of America for freedom, and defended Lincoln. When the American Minister in Paris wished to express his recognition to the savant, then living in extremely modest circumstances, by the present of a considerable sum of money, Reclus angrily rejected it. During the siege of Paris in 1870, Elisée Reclus joined the National Guard, and was one of the crew of the balloon under Nadar who endeavoured to convey news outside Paris. As a member of the International Association of Workmen, he published in the *Cri du Peuple*, at the time of the outbreak of the 18th March, 1871, a hostile manifesto against the Government at Versailles. Still belonging to the National Guard, which had now risen, he took part in a reconnaissance on the plateau of Chatillon, in which he was taken prisoner on the 5th of April. After seven months' imprisonment in Brest, during which he taught his fellow-prisoners mathematics, the court-martial in St. Germain condemned him, on 16th November, 1871, to be transported. This sentence caused a great outcry

in scientific circles, and from different quarters, especially from eminent English statesmen and men of letters, among them being Darwin, Wallace, and Lord Amberley, the President of the French Republic was urged to mitigate his punishment. Accordingly, Thiers commuted the sentence of transportation on 4th January, 1872, to one of simple banishment. Reclus then proceeded to Lugano, but soon afterwards lost his young wife there, whom he loved passionately, and who had followed him into banishment. Later on he went to Switzerland, where he settled at Clarens, near Montreux, on the Lake of Geneva, and devoted himself again to Communist and geographical studies. In 1879, Reclus returned to Paris, was appointed in 1892 Professor of Geography at Brussels, but in 1893 was again deprived of his post on account of Anarchist outrages, in which he was quite unjustly supposed to be implicated. The students thereupon left the university, and founded a free university, in which Reclus is at present a professor.

Elisée Reclus's Anarchism is explained externally not only by his intimate friendship with Kropotkin, but still more from his connexion with an "Anarchist family," for his brother, the eminent anthropologist Elié, and several of his nephews as well as their wives are devoted adherents of Anarchism. But while the younger members of the Reclus family are more closely connected with the "propaganda of action" (the engineer Paul Reclus was accused of being an accomplice of Vaillant), the older members,

especially Elisée, are learned dreamers who have nothing in common with the folly of the dynamitard. "The idea of Anarchism is beautiful, is great," says Elisée, "but these miscreants sully our teaching: he who calls himself an Anarchist should be one of a good and gentle sort. It is a mistake to believe that the Anarchist idea can be promoted by acts of barbarity." And in the preface to the last volume of his *Universal Geography* he says of his travels: "I have everywhere found myself at home, in my own country, among men, my brothers. I have never allowed myself to be carried away by sentiment, except that of sympathy and respect for all the inhabitants of the one great Fatherland. On this round earth that revolves so rapidly in space, a grain of sand amid infinity, is it worth while for us to hate one another?"

Reclus has no special doctrine, but shares generally the views of his friend Kropotkin, although his greater scientific insight on many points leads him to incline rather to the Collectivism of Proudhon and Bakunin. The "economy of the heap" (*tas*) appears to Reclus, at any rate in the province of agriculture, to be unworkable. He prefers a distribution of land among individuals, family groups, and communities, according to the proposition of individual and collective power of labour. "The moment a piece of landed property surpasses the limits which can be properly cultivated, the holder should have no right to claim the surplus for himself; it will fall to the share of another worker." The Russian *mir* is always before his thoughts as

the patron of peasant organisation. Nothing is more remarkable than the affection of the Anarchist followers of Proudhon and Bakunin for the Russian *mir* system. It would be a meritorious piece of sociological work to show the fundamental errors which underlie the agricultural systems that have been tried and have failed in modern attempts to revive them. The endeavour to revive them is now so general that it is no longer to be wondered at that we see those who are apparently most extreme, and even Anarchists, following the same reactionary stream as the Socialist Catholics and their followers. The folly of their proceedings is best seen in those people who angrily reject a revival of the guilds, but by no means object to the revival of the old village communism, which implies a far earlier stage of development. We are, however, digressing, but must add one further remark. The Anarchists are accustomed to say that their free economic organisation will quite absorb and devour politics, authority, and government, so that nothing of them remains; while, on the other hand, they represent the *mir* as the pattern of such an organisation. But how comes it that, in the very country where the *mir*, this "just" village communism, exists, in Russia itself, on the one hand famine is never absent,¹ and on the other the Czar's bureaucracy and

¹ This is seen, *inter alia*, by the number of persons wandering about seeking food—"a vagabond proletariat." In 1886 no less than 4,951,000 were wandering more than thirty versts from their dwellings. Even the women have to leave the villages to seek support elsewhere, and the number of women and children who thus are compelled to seek work at a distance is increasing every year. Thus,

Cossack tyranny flourish so exceedingly, and that the peasant population itself is the most powerful support of the arbitrary rule of their " Little Father," the Czar ?

It might seem surprising that a savant of Reclus's calibre does not himself perceive a refutation that is so obvious. But Reclus is a type: who does not know the figure—even here not seldom seen—of the earnest savant, full of the purest love and devotion for mankind, who dabbles in politics in his leisure hours ? It is as if in this time of leisure his spirit seeks to free itself from the severe discipline of his professional life. The man who, in his capacity as a doctor, a geographer, or physicist, would never allow subjective influences to trouble his method, deals with politics quite apart, as if there were not also a science of politics that, like any other science, regards freedom from the subjective standpoint, or from love and hatred as the first condition of the validity of its propositions. Reclus, the celebrated geographer, goes so far, as a politician, as to deny the value of political economy and to assert that every workman knows more, and is better acquainted with social laws, than the learned economist.

On the other hand, it is just this circumstance that gives this aged savant an importance in Anarchist theory, to which the originality and the teach-

e.g., in the district of the Government of Wjatka, in 1874, 2.68 per cent. ; in 1883, 6.46 per cent. ; in 1885, 7.22 per cent. of the women capable of work did this. Often whole families wander about, and women with children at the breast are no uncommon sight among the troops of wandering workmen. (Westländer, A., *Russland vor einem Regime-Wechsel*, Stuttgart, 1894, p. 28.)

ing of his Anarchist writings could give him no claim. The pamphlet *Evolution and Revolution* is nothing but a *rechauffé* of the well-known commonplaces of Anarchism; but the noble personality of Reclus that stands out before us at every sentence, the honourable intention, the high moral desire, the inspired hope which make even the errors of opponents so touching, give the little book the same importance for his followers as the *Contrat Social* once possessed, and makes his decoction the quintessence of Anarchist thought, in its noblest, purest, and also—as a consequence—its most nebulous form.

A man of quite a different stamp is Jean Grave, the soul of the chief Anarchist organ, the Parisian *Révolution*, which originated from the earlier paper, the *Révolution* of Kropotkin, which appeared previously in Geneva, and was suppressed there in 1885. Among the multitude of *déclassés* who gave up their millions, their rank, and their estates in order to preach Anarchy, Grave has been, since Proudhon, the only member of the proletariat who has made any important contributions to the theoretical edifice of the new doctrine. He was first a cobbler and then a printer, before becoming editor of the Parisian weekly journal.

Grave is the Netschajew of Kropotkin. In the year 1883 he published, under the name of Jehan Levagre, a production entitled *Publication du Groupe de se et 43e Arrondissements*, wherein he maintained the thesis that public propaganda must serve the secret “propaganda of action” as a means of de-

fence; it must offer it the means of action, namely, men, money, and influence; and especially must contribute to place these actions in the right light by commenting upon them. That is also the method in which Grave edits the *Révolution*. He is every inch the man of action, both in his journal and in his other writings, most of all in his book *La Société Mourante et l'Anarchie* (printed in London; the original edition is suppressed in France), which in 1894 brought upon its author a sentence of two years' imprisonment on account of its provocative tone. On the other hand, in his latest work, *La Société au Lendemain de la Révolution* (3d ed., Paris, 1893), Grave endeavours not only to write as a theorist, but has even sketched a definite picture of the Anarchist paradise. Adorned with the exterior drapery of the modern doctrine of descent and by the influence of H. Spencer, who has been totally misunderstood by Grave as by all other Anarchists, the teaching of Kropotkin here meets us without essential addition, but clear and precise. Grave only admits an organisation in the society of the future in the sense of a friendly agreement, formed by the identity of interests among individuals who group themselves together for the common execution of some task. These societies, which are formed and dissolved again merely according to the needs of the moment, are the *alpha* and *omega* of social organisation. From the group will proceed the production of shoes and the construction of further railways; there may be co-operation of groups, but no centralisation in the shape of commissions, delegations, or

similar "parasitic" institutions. The ticklish question of the position of children under Anarchy is solved (with the resolute optimism peculiar to Grave) by a *libre entente*. Naturally there can be no right to any child, since there will be at most merely a "family group," and not a family. Those who wish to nurse and look after their children can, of course, do so; and those who do not wish to, can probably find some enthusiast who will with pleasure relieve them of the burden of humanity to which they have certainly given life, but which concerns them no more from the moment when the umbilical cord between mother and child is severed. Of course there can be no talk of education under Anarchy, because education and discipline presuppose authority; and therefore education will be a matter of "individual initiative." On the other hand, education will flourish luxuriantly because every one will perceive its value; and so on.

The internal contradiction of Anarchism is nowhere so clearly seen as when it is a question of children, who form the most important group of "the weak." We have already touched upon this in connection with Stirner's union of egoists. But the more one attempts to understand this state of society in detail, the more violent becomes the contradiction between its supposed purpose and its actual consequences. For what purpose are we to overthrow the present order of society, and make any other form of society resting upon authority impossible? Is it in order to make the oppression of the weak by the strong, of minorities by majori-

ties, of one man by another, impossible; to give each individual his full "integral" freedom? And what, as a matter of fact, would be the consequences of Anarchy? Imagine wanton, idle mothers, without conscience and seeking only enjoyment—and Grave admits that such exist to-day, and that in a future society they cannot be compelled to support their children,—imagine that such persons are set free from the duty of caring for their own offspring, of suckling and attending to them, and that it is to be left to mere chance and the "enthusiasm" of others, whether a child gets milk, or even is fed and cared for. How many children would perish? How many "weaker ones" would fall victims to the brutality of the stronger in the valuation of their individuality? We cannot be deceived with the "innate harmony or solidarity, justice or love of mankind," or whatever other name may be given to this figment of the imagination; still less with the Land of Indolence, overflowing with plenty, promised by Kropotkin and his followers. Both of these suppositions must first of all be proved actually to exist; at present they are only maintained obstinately because, as a matter of fact, they cannot be proved.

Nature and life speak another language, perhaps more sorrowful and more convincing. The appeals to Darwin and Büchner are, in the language of Darwinism, the society of to-day, and any other form of society based upon the principle of the State implies a softening of the struggle for existence by artificial selection; but Anarchy would be natural

selection, and thus would be a step lower in development. The return to primitive stages, which have long since been passed through, would be the external form in which this fact would appear; thus, for example, the conditions described by Grave in "the sexual group" would mean a return to the times and conditions which, in all races of a primitive type living in total or partial Anarchy, have led to the dreadful custom of murdering children and old people. But this would mean a return to artificial selection in its most primitive and sanguinary form. Anarchists want us to undergo once again all the errors, terrors, and madness associated with the results won by human culture; and that there will not be even a respectable minority prepared to do. But they wish to do it in order to introduce "happiness for all" (*le bonheur de l'humanité*), to change the "struggle for existence" into a general "struggle with nature," as all Anarchists from Proudhon to Grave have dreamed; and in this lies the incomprehensible and ineffable contradiction.

More original than Reclus and Grave, if only after the fashion of the eclectic who can quicken the various ancient and modern elements of thought into a new spirit, is Daniel Saurin, who, in his work on *Order through Anarchy* (*L'Ordre par l'Anarchie*, Paris, 1893), tries to find a philosophic foundation for Anarchism. For Saurin, humanity is something substantial and real, not that *tohuwabohu* from which even Reclus cannot rescue Kropotkin's "economics of the heap." According to Saurin the normal man

combines two elements: a constant something that is permanent throughout the centuries, and, surpassing space and time, comes back again in all nations and persons; and a variable. The first is "man," the latter the individual. The human average (*le minimum humain*) appears in the bodily, moral, and mental equality of men; the individual is determined by the relation of these constants to an environment (*milieu*). Above the individual stands Man, and Man includes all individuals in himself. The laws of each individual are thus the laws of humanity; the law of society resides in ourselves; to recognise the essential conditions of our being is to recognise the essential form of society; to realise them, to be what man is, is to respect the reality of others, is to be "sociable." The most perfect form of society, therefore, is found in the fullest freedom of the ego; for this no human laws are needed. "To what purpose is it to re-enact natural laws and to wish to confirm their powerful commands by the ridiculous sanctions of men? Our obedience to them can add nothing to them; without our knowing or wishing it, we must obey them. Anarchy is thus not lack of order but the most natural order. . . . From the real society which binds us individuals together springs the universal law, the irrevocable moral order, to which each existence is bound and which it follows, without thereby belying the principle of Anarchy; for Anarchy cannot possibly be a mere unconditioned loosing of all bonds, the unreal absolute. . . . Man is higher than the individual; at least he stands before the individual, and in

him is the passing of phenomena. Thus, also, morals must come before sociology, and form the foundation of a society which seeks to be permanent."

Here, *post tot discrimina rerum*, we have again the moral order of the universe, to which we may apply the words of a celebrated Englishman, who said of certain moralists: "It would be thought absurd to say the planets must move in circles because the circle is the most perfect figure, and yet the dogmas of certain politicians are just as absurd as this assertion."

As the caricature of the social revolutionist in petticoats, Louise Michel¹ has, perhaps wrongly, obtained a kind of celebrity as a type. Her memoirs show her, as Zetkin proves, as a noble, self-sacrificing, unselfish, and mild character. "Like all sharply-defined characters, Louise Michel suffers from the defects of her qualities. She is courageous to the point of aimless recklessness, so full of character that she might be termed obstinate; sympathetic and soft-hearted to the verge of sentimentality. Her idealism often loses itself in the misty regions of indistinctness, and borders on mysticism; her kindness degenerates into weakness, her trustfulness into credulity. But all these faults cannot weaken the general impression of this pure and noble character; on the contrary, they are the

¹ Her books, *Le Livre de Misères* and *Prise de Possession*, were not procurable by me, and I had to depend upon Ossip Zetkin's sketch of her in *Charakterköpfen aus der französischen Arbeiterbewegung*, pp. 40-48, Berlin, 1893, and the *Volkslexikon*, l. c.

shadows which show up the lights more clearly and distinctly. Her Anarchism, Socialism, or whatever else it may be called, has nothing in common with modern scientific Socialism, except its unsparing criticism of the modern form of society and its persistent attempt to transform it and to produce a state of things more suitable to modern conditions. But her criticism finds support in quite different arguments; an idealist lack of clearness enfolds the end to be attained, and still more the means to it. She knows historical facts well enough, but lacks insight into the historical process of development; and still less does she possess a clear comprehension of economic relationships. To her a social transformation is not the natural and necessary product of historical and economic development, but the demand made by a passionate feeling of justice, a categorical imperative. If Louise Michel had lived in the middle ages, she would, without doubt, have been the foundress of a new religious order; as a child of the nineteenth century, as an atheist, who cannot postpone the redress of injustice into another life, she became a social revolutionary."

Her career shows the unselfishness and self-sacrifice with which Louise Michel carried out her ideas. She was born in 1836 at the French castle of Broncourt; she calls herself "a bastard"; her mother was a simple peasant girl, an orphan without either brothers or sisters, brought up in the castle, and seduced by the son of its owner. The young man's parents decided that Louise and her mother should

remain in the castle, as an act of justice, not of kindness. After the death of her grandparents Louise left the castle with her mother in 1850, passed her examination as a teacher, and, as she would not take the oath necessary for holding office in Napoleonic France, she opened a "free school," *i. e.*, a private school in a little village. In 1856 she came to Paris as assistant teacher in another private school, lived in extreme poverty, took a most active part in the struggles of the Commune in May, 1871, was taken prisoner and was to have been shot, but was condemned in December, 1871, to be transported to New Caledonia, whence she returned in 1880, in consequence of the general amnesty then given. She took part in editing Anarchist journals, and was condemned in 1886 to five years' imprisonment "for incitement to plunder." After three years she was pardoned by the President, but "she regarded this as a disgraceful insult," against which she protested violently, and absolutely refused to accept it, so that she had to be turned out of prison by force. Since then she has lived in London, where she acts as head of the "*Réveil International des Femmes*," an organisation possessing a journal and preaching an exceedingly confused and old-maidish form of female emancipation.

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Around these figures of modern French Anarchism are grouped a number of theorists of inferior rank, partly belonging to the literary aftergrowth and Bohemia, partly learned persons, contributors

to the *Révolté*, the *Père Peinard*, the *Revue Anarchiste*, the *L'en Dehors*, and other Anarchist prints in Paris,¹ mostly of a very ephemeral character.

Thus we have G. Eliévant, who wrote a declaration of Anarchist principles (*Déclarations*, Paris, 1893), in consequence of a charge made against him in 1893 in connection with the dynamite robbery at Soisy-sous-Etiolles, a book regarded by the Anarchists as one of the standard works of their literature. A. Hamon, a learned sociologist, has written a pamphlet, *Les Hommes et les Théories de l'Anarchie* (Paris, 1893), which has enjoyed a wide circulation; and is preparing a large *Psychology of Anarchists*, of which he has already published a short summary (see Dubois, *u. s.*, pp. 207-243). Hamon, in order to gain a knowledge empirically of the assumptions of psychology, has set on foot an inquiry (*enquête*), and put to several Anarchists the question, how and why they have become Anarchists. An examination of the confessions thus obtained showed that the chief peculiarity of the Anarchist mind is the inclination to revolt, which displays itself in the most various forms, such as a desire for opposition, criticism, and love of modernity (*philoneismus*); and that this tendency is combined with a remarkable love of freedom and strongly developed individuality. "The Anarchist must be free: he hates laws and authority"—all three traits unite in one; but Hamon's investigations completely confirm our assertion, that Anarchism is principally an emphasis-

¹ Cf. F. Dubois, *Le Pêril Anarchiste*, pp. 93-120; mostly superficial, but good on this topic.

ing of the sentiment of individuality and freedom, and cannot be explained sufficiently—perhaps not at all—by mere pauperism; in other words, Anarchism is not an economic but a political question. But to this predisposition to individualism, says Hamon, there must be united, in order to produce an Anarchist, also a strongly developed sentiment of Altruism, a fanatical love of humanity, a strong sense of justice, and finally, a keen faculty for logic. We do not wish to deny this; but we have seen that Cosmopolitanism, an over-excited sense of justice, and a certain tendency to dialectic *jeux d'esprit*, has been a common quality of all the doctrines we have hitherto described.

Charles Malato (de Corné), of the old Italian nobility, the son of a Communist, with whom he went to New Caledonia, is one of the chief literary representatives and more eager supporters of the propaganda of Anarchism in Paris. Besides a *Philosophy of Anarchy*, a book called *Révolution Chrétienne et Révolution Sociale*, and the widely circulated pamphlet, *Les Travailleurs des Villes aux Travailleurs des campagnes* (issued anonymously in 1888, and recently again at Lyons in 1893), he has written a long-winded diary, *De la Commune à l'Anarchie* (Paris, 1894), a kind of family history of Anarchism in Paris, its press, its groups, and its representatives, from doctrinaires like Grave and Kropotkin to the men of action like Pini, Ravachol, and Vailant.

Other names of some note in the Anarchist world are Zo d'Axa (his real name is Galland), the former

editor of *L'en Dehors*, a literary adventurer who has wandered into the camp of every party; Sebastian Faure, the father of the *Père Peinard* and author of *Le Manchinisme et ses Conséquences*; Bernard Lazare, Octave Mirbeau, François Guy, author of *Les Préjugés et l'Anarchie* (Béziers, 1888); Emil Darnaud, author of *La Société Future* (1890), *Mendiants et Vagabonds, une Révolution à Foix*, and others. The programme of these men is almost without exception that of Kropotkin, which they water down and popularise in numerous newspaper articles and pamphlets. Some of them, like Faure and Duprat, are decidedly men of action; others, like Saurin and Mirbeau, condemn bombs as the most sanguinary of all forms of authority.

France does not to-day possess any representatives of individualist Anarchism. An isolated adherent of the Anarchist Collectivism of Proudhon is Adolphe Bonthons, for some time business manager of an Anarchist paper in Lyons, showing himself an eager Collectivist and opponent of rent and profit in many writings (*e. g.*, *Menace à la Bourgeoisie*, Lyons, 1882, and *La Répartition des Produits du Travail*, 1881; of Garin, *Die Anarchisten*, p. 94), and demanding quite in the style of the Anarchist agitator the absolute abolition of all authority. To-day Bonthons is quite behind the times, and does not himself regard himself as an Anarchist.

Finally, we note as eager defenders of Anarchist Communism the Italians Carlo Cafiero, the former friend of Bakunin, who devoted the whole of his great wealth to the Anarchist cause; Merlino, and

Malatesta¹—all of them men of action of the most reckless character, who have become acquainted with the prisons of many lands, and still wander through life as homeless revolutionaries.

¹ I have only seen Malatesta's dialogue *Between Peasants* in a French translation: *Entre Paysans, Traduit de l'Italien*, 6th ed., Paris, 1892.





CHAPTER VI

GERMANY, ENGLAND, AND AMERICA

Individualist and Communist Anarchism—Arthur Mülberger—Theodor Hertzka's *Freeland*—Eugen Dühring's "Anticratism"—Moritz von Egidy's "United Christendom"—John Henry Mackay—Nietzsche and Anarchism—Johann Most—Auberon Herbert's "Voluntary State"—R. B. Tucker.



HERE is a well-marked geographical division, not only in the Anarchism of agitation, but also in Anarchist theory. The Anarchist Communism, to which the "propaganda of action" is allied, appears to be almost exclusively confined to the Romance peoples, the French, Spaniards, and Italians; while the Teutonic nations appear to incline more towards individualist Anarchism. If this geographical division is not quite exact, it must be remembered that these views themselves are not so clearly separated, and that the ideas of Proudhon rarely develop into pure Individualism as proclaimed by Stirner. The external distinction between Individualists and Communists is certainly marked most clearly by the condemnation of the foolish propa-

ganda of action of the former; and in order to prevent the disagreeable confusion of their views with the perpetrators of bomb outrages, the theorists of Germany and England give their systems more harmless names, such as Free Land, Anticratism, United Christianity, Voluntarism, and so on. It is perhaps owing to this circumstance that States which supervise mental movements in the minds of their citizens so closely, so anxiously, as do Austria and Germany, allow the extension of the theoretical propaganda of a movement which is only distinguished from the doctrines of Kropotkin, as explained above, by a difference in formulating the common axiom on which they are based.

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In the beginning of the seventies there appeared in Germany an eager worshipper of Proudhon, named Arthur Mülberger, born in 1847, who has practised since 1873 as a physician, and lately as medical officer in Crailsheim, and who has explained with great clearness separate portions of Proudhon's teaching in various articles in magazines and reviews.¹ Mülberger's writings have certainly chiefly an historical value; but he is one of the few who have not merely written about and criticised Proudhon, but have thoroughly studied him. He is accordingly, in spite of his somewhat partisan attitude as a supporter of Proudhon, certainly his most trustworthy and faithful interpreter.

Of all modern phenomena, which, according to

¹ Now collected as *Studien über Proudhon*, Stuttgart, 1893.

Proudhon's assumption that complete economic freedom must absorb all political authority, should introduce Anarchy by means of economic institutions, the most important is undoubtedly the so-called "Free Land" movement, whose "father" is Theodor Hertzka. Born on the 13th July, 1845, at Buda Pesth, Hertzka studied law, but afterwards turned to journalism, in which he gained the reputation of the most brilliant journalist in Vienna. In the seventies he was editor of the *Neue Freie Presse*, and in 1880 he founded the Vienna *Allgemeine Zeitung*; but since 1889 he has been editor of the *Zeitschrift für Staatsund Volkswirtschaft*. His book *Freeland*, a picture of the society of the future (*Freiland, ein Sociales Zukunftsbild*), which appeared in 1889, had an extraordinary success, and produced a movement for the realisation of the demands and ideas therein expressed. The expedition which was sent out to "Freeland," after years of agitation, prepared at great expense and watched with the eager curiosity of all Europe, appears to-day, however—as was hardly to be wondered at—to have failed.

"Freeland," as depicted by Hertzka in his social romance, is a community founded upon the principle of unlimited publicity combined with unlimited freedom. Everyone throughout "Freeland" must be able to know at any time what commodities are in greater or less demand, and what branches of work produce greater or less profit. Thus in "Freeland" everybody has the right and the power to apply himself, as far as he is capable, to those forms

of production that are at any time most profitable. A careful department of statistics publishes in an easily read and rapid form every movement of production and consumption, and thus the movement of prices in all commodities is quickly brought to everyone's notice. But in order that everyone may undertake that branch of production most suitable and profitable to him, from the information thus obtained, the necessary means of production, including the forces of nature, are freely at the disposal of all, without interest, but a repayment has to be made out of the result of production.

Each has a right to the full return from his labour; this is obtained by free association of the workers. The entrance into each association is free to everyone, and anyone can leave any association at any time. Each member has a right to a share in the net product of the association corresponding to the work done by him. The work done is reckoned for each member in proportion to the number of hours worked. The work done by the freely elected and responsible managers or directors is reckoned, by means of free agreement made with each member of the union, as equal to a certain number of hours' work per day. The profit made by the community is reckoned up at the close of each working year, and after deduction for repayment of capital, and the taxes payable to the "Freeland" commonwealth, is divided amongst its members. The members, in case of the failure or liquidation of the association, are liable for its debts in proportion to their share of the profits. This liability for the

debts of the association corresponds, in case of dissolution, to the claim of the guarantor members on the property available. The highest authority of the association is the General Assembly, in which every member possesses the same voting power, active and passive. The conduct of the business of the company is placed in the hands of a directorate, chosen by the General Assembly for a certain period, whose appointment is, however, revocable at any time. Besides this the General Assembly elects every year an overseer who has to watch over the conduct of the directors. There are neither masters nor servants; only free workers; there are also no proprietors, only employers of the capital of the association. The forms of capital necessary for production are therefore as free from owners as is the land.

The most extensive publicity of all business proceedings is the prime supposition for the proper working of this organisation, which can only exist by the removal of all hindrances to the free activity of the individual will guided by enlightened self-interest. There can and need be no business secrets; on the contrary, it is the highest interest of all to see that everyone's capacity for work is directed to where it will produce the best results. The working-statements of the producers are therefore published; the purchase and sale of all imaginable products and commodities of "Freeland" trade takes place in large warehouses, managed and supervised for the benefit of the community.

The highest authority in "Freeland" is at the

same time the banker of the whole population. Not merely every association, but every person has his account in the books of the Central Bank, which looks after all payments inwards as well as all money paid out from the greatest to the smallest by means of a comprehensive clearing system.

All the expenditure of the community is defrayed by all in common, and by each person singly, exactly in proportion to its income; for which purpose the Central Bank debits each with his share in the total.

The chief item in the budget of "Freeland" expenditure is "maintenance"; which includes everything spent on account of persons incapacitated for work or excused from it, and who therefore have a right to free support, such as all women, children, sick persons, defectives, and men over sixty years of age. On the other hand, justice, police, military, and finance arrangements cost nothing in "Freeland." There are no paid judges or police officials, still fewer soldiers, and the taxes, as seen above, come in of their own accord. There is not even a code of criminal or civil law. For the settlement of any disputes that may arise, arbitrators are chosen, who make their decisions verbally, and from whom there is an appeal to the Board of Arbitrators. But they have practically nothing to do, for there is neither robbery nor theft in "Freeland"; since "men who are normal in mind and morals cannot possibly commit any violences against other people in a community in which all proper interests of each member are equally regarded." Criminals

are therefore treated as people who are suffering from mental or moral disease.

We need not point out that we here have to deal with an attempt to revive Proudhon's thoughts and plans, and that our criticisms on these apply equally to *Freeland*. If to-day extravagant praise is lavished on Hertzka's originality, that only proves that people who criticise and condemn Proudhon so readily have not read him; and even when Archdukes give the "Freeland" project their moral and financial support, that only proves again how little, even now, the real meaning of Anarchism is understood, and how slavishly people submit to words.

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Eugen Dühring has raved against "the State founded on force" as often as against Anarchism, in his various writings; he has as often pronounced a scornful judgment upon the literary connections of Anarchism as he has sought to ally himself with the so-called "honourable" Anarchists in his little paper (*The Modern Spirit—Der Modernen Völkergeist*, in Berlin) that is apparently brought out for the sake of a Dühring cult. There appears at least to be a contradiction between the theory of Anarchism and Dühring's Anti-Semitism. Nevertheless, Dühring undoubtedly belongs to the Anarchists, and has never very seriously defended himself against this charge. His haughty and biassed criticisms of Proudhon, Stirner, and Kropotkin (he excepts only Bakunin, the enemy of the "Hebrew" Marx) are sufficiently explained by his own unexampled weak-

ness and love of belittling others, without seeking any further motives; "it must be night where his own stars shine"; and as his followers have generally read nothing else beside his lucubrations, it is very easy to explain the great influence which Dühring exercises at present upon the youth of Germany, and why he is regarded by some people as the only man of genius since Socrates, and as a man of the most unparalleled originality, which he is not, by a long way.

However much Dühring may belittle Proudhon, he is himself, at least as a social politician, and certainly as an economist, merely a weak dilution of Proudhon. In *The Modern Spirit* Proudhon's Anarchism was recently credited with the intention of abolishing not only all government, but all organisation. Dühring, it was said, had reduced this mistaken view to its proper origin, and in place of Anarchism had set up "Anticratism," which does not intend to overthrow direction and organisation, but merely to abolish all unjust force, "the State founded on force." We who know Proudhon, know that what is here ascribed to Dühring is exactly what Proudhon taught as "no-government" (*Anarchie*); and there was nothing left to the great Dühring but to bluff his half-fledged scholars with a new word that means nothing more or less than Anarchy. That which is Dühring's own, namely, the so-called "theory of force," has not an origin of any great profundity. He takes as the elements of society two human beings—not at all the sexual pair—but the celebrated "two men" of Herr

Dühring, one of whom oppresses the other, uses force to him, and makes him work for him. These "two men" explain, for him, all economic functions and social problems; the origin of social distinctions, of political privileges, of property, capital, betterment, exploitation, and so on. By these two famous men he lets himself be guided directly into Proudhon's path. "Wealth," declares Dühring, "is mastery over men and things." Proudhon would never have been so silly—although Dühring means the same as he does—as to call wealth the mastery over men and things, and Engel formulates the proposition more correctly as: "Wealth is the mastery over men, by means of mastery over things"; although this deserves the name of a definition neither in the logical nor economic sense. But Dühring uses his ambiguous proposition in order to be able to represent riches on the one hand as being something quite justifiable and praiseworthy (the mastery over things), and on the other as robbery (mastery over men), as "property due to force." Here we have a miserable degradation and commonplace expression of the antimony of Proudhon: "Property is theft," and "Property is liberty." We also find Proudhon, again distorted, in Dühring's statement that the time spent in work by various workers, whether they be navvies or sculptors, is of equal value.

The "personalist Sociality" of Dühring, as its creator terms it elsewhere, is the conception of arrangements and organisations by means of which every individual person may satisfy all the necessi-

ties and luxuries of life, from the lowest to the highest, through the mutual working together and combination with every other individual. This personalist Sociality is, of course, anti-monarchical, and opposed to all privileges of position and birth; it is also "anti-religionist," for it recognises no authorities that are beyond control, except only conformity to nature. It starts from the actual condition of the individual; but this can only be known by its actions, and is not determined by birth. As regards public affairs, positions that are technically prominent should be given by universal, direct, and equal suffrage to persons who have shown by their actions that they possess the necessary qualifications for them. As regards the anti-religious element, which in Dühring's case really implies Anti-Semitism, the place of all religion and everything religious is taken by Dühring's philosophy of actuality or being. Among the just claims of the individual person Dühring reckons not only bodily freedom and immunity from injury, but also immunity from economic injury. Just as on the one hand every kind of slavery or limitation by united action or social forms must be unhesitatingly rejected, so, on the other hand, unlimited power of disposal over the means of production and natural capital must be limited by suitable public laws in such a way that no one can be excluded from the means supplied by nature, and reduced to a condition of starvation. The right to labour, as well as freedom of choice in labour, must everywhere be maintained.

The economic corner-stones of personalist Socialty

are, as Dühring's follower, Emil Döle,¹ explains, "metallic currency as the foundation of all economic relationships, and individual property, especially capital, as the necessary and inviolable foundation for every condition that is not based on robbery and violence. The logic and necessity of any form of society rests on private property, and that is also the basis of Dühring's system; but his reforms are directed to rejecting the ingredients of injustice, robbery, and violence towards persons that are commingled with these fundamental forms. To bring this about, the principle under which the merely economic mechanics of values have free play must be rejected; and instead of it, the original personal and political rights of men must be recognised. Dühring therefore regards a general association of workers as far more essential than strikes, and would wish political means (in the narrower sense of politics) brought once more into the foreground, and extended much farther than before. He certainly rejects the trickery of Parliament, but not a representation of the working classes seriously meant and honourably carried out. He also does not yield to that logic of wretchedness which expects every reform to arise from ever-increasing misery, but takes into account material and mental progress and the condition of the masses."

In all this it is easy to recognise Proudhon's views;

¹ Döle, *Eugen Dühring, etwas von dessen Charakter, Leistungen, und reformatorischen Beruf*, Leipzig, 1893. Compare also Fr. Engel's, *Dühring's Umwälzung der Wissenschaft*, 3d ed. Stuttgart, 1894.

even sometimes his theory of property. And even if their views are not alike formally, and Dühring does not quite understand Proudhon's "Mutualism," yet he ought to have regarded the French social reformer somewhat less condescendingly and confusedly. But he has also had a very low opinion of Stirner; yet, however persistently he and his followers may deny it, Dühring's "Personalism" is not only exactly the same as Stirner's "individual" (*Einsiger*), but Dühring himself is the most repellent illustration of the egoist-individual of Stirner. Both Stirner and Proudhon have assumed as the necessary pre-supposition of the abolition of government, individuals who are able to govern themselves, *i. e.*, moral individuals, which means "persons."

When, finally, Dühring apparently seeks to limit the Anarchist phrase of the abolition of all government, by saying that Anticratism is the denial of all unrighteous exercise of force and usurpation of authority, this is palpable fencing. Dühring would tell the masses which form of force is right and which wrong; which should be maintained, and which not; and the masses will hasten to follow his dictates. Dühring, the great opponent of all metaphysics and *a priori* conceptions, at once sets up, just like Jean Jacques Rousseau, "the modern Hebrew," an absolute concept "justice," and transforms the world according to it. Who can help laughing at this?

Dühring has tried to reconcile his prejudice against the Jews with the foregoing doctrine, by distinguishing nations from the standpoint of personal-

ism, and regarding the existence of higher races side by side with lower races as a hindrance—indeed the most serious hindrance—to the realisation of “personalist Sociality.”

“Nothing is easier than to make a wise grimace.”

Perhaps the most peculiar of the circle of theoretical Anarchists is Herr von Egidy. If Dühring has succeeded in enlivening Anarchism by an admixture of Anti-Jewish persecution, Herr von Egidy has accomplished the far greater success of enlivening Anarchism with a new religious cult, called “United Christianity,” added to the spirit of Prussian militarism and squiredom. When the new Apostle stood as a candidate for the Reichstag in 1893, supporting his new Christianity and the military programme rejected by the dissolved Parliament, he was able to secure 3000 votes. This is a piece of statistics that shows the confusion of ideas existing in so-called intelligence.

Moritz von Egidy¹ was born at Mainz on 29th August, 1847, served in the Prussian army, and reached the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. Afterwards he exchanged his military command for an apostleship, after gaining knowledge by private study. His Christianity is a religion without dogma or confession, *a lucus a non lucendo*, but deserves respect as a social phenomenon in view of conditions in Germany.

The “United Christendom” is to be the union of

¹ See, for a study of his views, the popular publication, *Einiges Christenthum*, Berlin, 1893, and the weekly paper (since 1894), *Ver-söhrung* (Reconciliation).

all men in the idea of time and applied Christianity, in the sense of a humanity that approaches more nearly to God. The new religion only values and lays stress on life, on "morality lived"; doctrine and dogma must be laid aside; and thus Von Egidy arrives at the remarkable paradox of "a religion without dogma or confession." The purpose of religion is practical, and in dogmas he sees forms, among which each individual may choose for himself, forms which (according to the main principle of development which he places in the forefront of all his arguments) are in a state of continual flux and change. What religion has to offer is to be expressed not in dogmas, but only in points of view; not in institutions, but in directions for guidance. For this purpose it is not necessary that Egidy's disciples should form themselves into a church, for that even contradicts the spirit of this religion; their master rather tells them "to organise nothing, to actualise nothing." Not parties, nor unions, but only persons and actions, is what he wants, and these will each in his own way lead men into the earthly paradise of which Egidy speaks with truly prophetic confidence.

The State, as we now know it, is for Egidy, who goes to work very cautiously, no more and no less than a link in the eternal chain of development; a stage, beyond which he looks into a divinely appointed kingdom of the future, that will no longer rest upon the pillars of force and fear, which "contradict the consciousness of God, wherein there will be no difference between governed and government."

He quickly disposes of the objection that men are not fit for such an ideal State. "Once we have created conditions in accordance with the divine will, the men for them will be there. If there was a paradise for the first primitive man, why should there not be one for civilised man of to-day? We only need to create it for ourselves; and once we have gained entrance to it we shall not be driven out of it a second time—we have had our warning. Of course the 'old Adam' must be left outside." Of course! But Egidy forgets in the ardour of inspiration that it is not so easy to leave the old Adam outside, and that his assumption of a primitive paradise for mankind, for the *homme sauvage* of the "social contract," directly contradicts the theory of evolution which he has just unhesitatingly accepted. He also contradicts himself when he at first maintains that the "conditions in accordance with the divine will" will produce men fitted for them, and afterwards says: "Do not let us trouble about programmes and systems, or modes of execution; only get the right men, and we need not trouble ourselves about how to realise our proposals."

As may be seen, his "United Christianity" not only has a Socialist side, but it is sheer Socialism, the main basis of which is moral and intellectual self-consciousness. Egidy has certainly not drawn up a definite programme, and could not draw it up; "since we are all at the present moment, without exception, undergoing a thorough transformation of 'the inner man,' it is more reasonable to defer single efforts till the general consciousness has become en-

lightened on essential points." Egidy can thus only open up "points of view" on the social question, leaving everything else to the individual and to natural evolution. Hence a definite social doctrine is excluded.

Thus, upon the question of property, he says that property is "not so much the source as the logical consequence of the immature ideas of human rights and duties which we still hold. With the progressive transformation of our ideas generally, with the adoption of a totally different view of life, with the dawn of a new view of the world, our conceptions of property will also alter; not sooner, but surely. This new view of life will give a direction and aim to our endeavours for improvement. The new treatment of the question of property, however, will only be one of the results of the general new tendencies. Certainly it will be one of the most important; but we do not need beforehand to recognise any one of the manifold tendencies indicated as a binding law; just as we may generally take what is called Socialism into consideration, as soon as it is offered to us on a firmly defined form, but never accept it without further demur as a new law.

"Instead of the words 'equality' and 'freedom,' I say 'self-reliance' and 'independence.' They express better that which concerns the individual; and they also avoid the objection of being 'impossible.' That even self-reliance and independence may experience a certain limitation from the demands of our life in common one with another, I know quite well; but they do not mislead us be-

forehand to the same erroneous ideas and especially not to the same demands, so impossible of fulfilment, as the word equality. The highest attainable is always merely that we create for the individual equal, *i. e.*, equally good, conditions of existence. But owing to the inequality of individuals similar conditions do not always produce by any means the same result of well-being; the utilisation of the conditions is a matter for the individual, and is unequal. Thus we should have to arrange these conditions as *unequal* for each individual in order to give all individuals really equal conditions of existence. Apart from the fundamental impossibility in our human imperfection, of doing absolute justice to these requirements, the equality thus restored would the very next moment be impaired in a thousand different directions."

Egidy is a pure Anarchist, perhaps the purest of all, but he is certainly not the wisest. "The greatest fault in Anarchism," he says, "in the eyes of the opponent whom it has to overcome, is its name. This, however, is not quite fair to the representatives of these ideas; for why must everything have a name, and why must names be sought which annihilate what at present exists, instead of choosing names which indicate the highest connotation of meanings so far recognised? Why say, 'without government'? Why not rather, 'self-discipline, self-government'? Discipline and government mean things of great value; without which we could not imagine human existence. The only question is, who exercises government over us, and who wields

the rod of discipline: whether it is others or we ourselves?" To be sure, he draws a distinction between "Anarchists of Blood" and "noble Anarchists"; he condemns the former and associates himself with the latter. But that does not hinder this remarkable man from having a Bismarckian patriotism, sullen prejudices against the Jews, and, above all, incomprehensible zeal on behalf of Prussian Militarism and Monarchy.

"The monarchical idea in itself," says this most remarkable of all Anarchists, "by no means contradicts the idea of the self-reliance and independence of the individual. The prince will not be lacking in the comprehension necessary for a redrafting of the monarchical idea to suit the people when they have attained their majority. The prince belongs to the people; the prince the foremost of the people; the prince in direct intercourse with the people. The prince neither absolute ruler nor constitutional regent; but the prince a personality, an ego; with a right to execute his will as equal as that of any one of the people. No confused responsibility of ministers thrust in between people and prince. There is no 'crown' as a conception; there is only a living wearer of the crown—the king, the prince—as responsible head of the people. The present servants of the crown become commissioners of the people." Compare these expressions with Proudhon's attitude in regard to the dynastic question described above, and consider, in order to do justice to each, that Edigy as well as Proudhon had in view when speaking a monarch who knew how to

surround himself at least with the appearance of "social imperialism." If, indeed, Edigy were one day to be disillusioned by his "social prince," just as Proudhon was by *his* monarch, yet it should not be forgotten that the "social prince" might also likewise be greatly disillusioned some day as to the loyalty of Egidy's followers.

Germany possesses an honest and upright Anarchist of a strongly individualist tendency in the naturalised Scot, John Henry Mackay, who was born at Greenock on 6th February, 1864. In Mackay we find again one of those numerous persons who have descended from that sphere of society where want and distress are only known by name, into the habitations of human pity, and have risen from these upon the wings of poetic fancy and warmheartedness into the "regions where the happy gods do dwell," and where Anarchy does not need to be brought into being. Mackay is of an essentially artistic nature; like Cafiero, he is also a millionaire, which means a completely independent man. Both these circumstances are needed to explain his individualist Anarchism. His novel, which created some sensation, entitled *The Anarchist: A Picture of Society at the Close of the Nineteenth Century*,¹ which appeared in 1891, is a pendant to Theodor Hertzka's novel, *Freeland*, to which it is also not inferior in genuinely artistic effects, as *e. g.*, the development

¹ *Die Anarchisten*, etc.; Zürich *Verlagsmagazin*; a popular edition has also appeared in Berlin; also an English translation. Boston, 1891; and in French, Paris, 1892.

of the character of Auban, an egoist of Stirner's kind, and in touching description, as that of poverty in Whitechapel. The book does not contain any new ideas: but is nevertheless important as making a thorough and clear distinction between individualist and communist Anarchism; while, on the other hand, the glaring colouring of the descriptions of misery possesses a certain provocative energy which the author certainly did not intend, for he rejects the "propaganda of action."

It is only to be expected as a matter of course that in Germany as in France, that literary Bohemia, certain "advanced minds" should prefer to give themselves out as Anarchists and Individualists, as *Einzig*; but it must not therefore be concluded that it is our duty to concern ourselves with writers such as Pudor, Bruno Wille, and others. We might indeed utter a warning against extending too widely the boundaries of Anarchist theory, and thus obliterating them altogether. In our opinion it is quite incorrect to regard as a theoretical Anarchist every author who, like Nietzsche,¹ preached a purely

¹ Even in a philosophic sense, Nietzsche's Anarchism is a mere fable. Schellwien truly remarks: "Max Stirner replaces freedom by individuality, by the evolution of the individual as such, but he cannot shew that anything else would happen but the oppression of the weaker individuality by the stronger; a state of things in which not individuality but brute force would reign. Friedrich Nietzsche draws this conclusion, and would have this oppression of the weak by the strong; he would have the aristocratic will of the stronger, who in his eyes are alone the good. He raises the 'will for power' to a world-principle." Elsewhere Nietzsche positively advocates, *e. g.*, the reduction of some men to slavery for the benefit of the aristocracy of the strong. This sort of thing is hardly Anarchism.

philosophic individualism or egotism, without ever having given a thought to the reformation of society. To what does this lead? Some even include Ibsen among theoretical Anarchists because in a letter to Brandes he exclaims: "The State is the curse of the individual. The State must go. I will take part in this revolution. Let us undermine the idea of the State; let us set up free will and affinity of spirit as the only conditions for any union: that is the beginning of a freedom that is worth something." Such expressions may certainly show Ibsen's Anarchist tendencies, but they by no means elevate him to the position of a teacher; for that position one might sooner quote one of his own most powerful characters, Brand, that modern Faust after the style of Stirner. But Brand is a gloomy figure, who would not make many converts to individualism.

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We may here cursorily notice the position of Johann Most in the theory of Anarchism, although this man, fateful and gloomy as has been his *rôle* in the history of Anarchist action, can hardly be taken into account as a theorist, and, moreover,—which is more important,—he is not even a pure Anarchist. Johann Most forms the link between social Democracy, to which he formerly attached himself, and Anarchism, to which he now devotes his baleful talents. But, as a matter of fact, Most goes no farther than ancient and modern followers of Babœuf have gone at all times; the "decision of society"

is the authoritative boundary which separates him from the communist Anarchists.

Land and all movable and immovable capital should, in his opinion, be the property of the whole of society,—here we perceive a very conservative notion as compared with Kropotkin,—but should be given up for the use of the single groups of producers, which may be formed by free agreement (*libre entente*) among themselves. The products of industry should remain the property of those organisations whose work and creation they are, thus becoming collective property. To determine value and price, bureaux of experts should be formed by society—an arrangement which Grave considers highly reactionary, because implying authority,—and these bureaux are to calculate how much work is represented in each community, and what is its value on this basis. The price thus determined cannot be altered, because consumers will also form free groups, for the purpose of buying, just as the producers did. Other free groups will look after the bringing up of children. Marriage becomes a free contract between man and woman, and can be entered into or dissolved at pleasure. There are no laws, but only a “decision of society” in each case.

If with these views Most must be regarded among Anarchist theorists—if he is an Anarchist at all—as a representative of extreme Conservatism, yet, on the other hand, there is not the slightest doubt that he must be looked upon as the theorist of force, the apostle of the most violent propaganda of action. In his notorious journal, *Freiheit* (*Freedom*), as well

as in numberless pamphlets, Johann Most has drawn up an inexhaustible compendium for "the men of action." The little groups, which are to-day characteristic of Anarchism, are his idea, and his, too, are the tactics of bomb-throwing. In the pamphlet¹ on the scientific art of revolutionary warfare and dynamiters, he explains exactly where bombs should be placed in churches, palaces, ballrooms, and festive gatherings. Never more than one Anarchist should take charge of the attempt, so that in case of discovery the Anarchist party may suffer as little harm as possible. The book contains also a complete dictionary of poisons, and preference is given to Poison should be employed against politicians, traitors, and spies. *Freedom*, his journal, is distinguished from the rest of the Anarchist press—which is mostly merely *doctrinaire*—by its constant provocation to a war of classes, to murder and incendiarism. "Extirpate the miserable brood!" says *Freedom*, speaking of owners of property—"extirpate the wretches! Thus runs the refrain of a revolutionary song of the working classes, and this will be the exclamation of the executive of a victorious proletariat army when the battle has been won. For at the critical moment the executioner's block must ever be before the eyes of the revolutionary. Either he is cutting off the heads of his enemies or his own is being cut off. Science gives us means which make it possible to accomplish the wholesale destruction of these beasts

¹ *Die wissenschaftliche revolutionäre Kriegskunst und der Dynamitführer.*

quietly and deliberately." Elsewhere he says, "Those of the reptile brood who are not put to the sword remain as a thorn in the flesh of the new society; hence it would be both foolish and criminal not to annihilate utterly this race of parasites," and so forth.

These are only a few specimens of the jargon of "Anarchism of action," of which Johann Most is the classic representative; we shall refer elsewhere to his varied activity as such.

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Most, whose special Anarchist influence is exercised on English soil, is also the link between German and English Anarchism.

England possesses a theorist of a higher type in Auberon Herbert, who, like Bakunin and Kropotkin, is a scion of a noble house. Herbert began as a representative of Democracy in the seventies, and to-day edits in London a paper called *The Free Life*, in which he preaches an individualist Anarchism of his own, or, as he himself calls it, "Voluntarism." He does not wish constituted society, as such, to be abolished; his "voluntary State" is distinguished from the present compulsory State in that it is absolutely free to any individual to enter or leave the State as he wishes.

"I demand," says Herbert,¹ "that the individual should be self-owner, the actual owner of his bodily and mental capacities, and in consequence owner of

¹ Anarchy and Voluntarism (*The Free Life*), vol. ii., p. 99, October, 1894.

all that he can acquire by these capacities, only assuming that he treats his fellow-men as his equals and as owners of their own capacities."

"If thus the individual is legally master of himself and legally owner of all that he has won by the aid of his own capabilities, then we must further conclude that the individual as such has the right to defend what is his own, even by force against force (understanding by force those forms of deception which are in reality only an equivalent of force); and since he now has this right of defence by force, he can transfer it to a corporation and to men who undertake to watch over the practical application of this right on his behalf; which corporation may be denoted by the practical term of 'State.' The State is rightfully born, only if the individuals have the choice of handing over to it their right of defence, and that no individual is compelled to take part in it when once formed, or to maintain it. When we consider that every force must be set in action for some definite purpose, the State or the sphere of society's force must be organised; yet every individual must retain his natural right of deciding for himself whether he will join the State and maintain it or not. If then the State is legitimate as an agreement to defend one's self-ownership against all attacks, there are sufficient reasons for creating such an organisation and placing the exercise of the forces mentioned in its hands, instead of keeping them in our hands as individuals. . . . I fully admit that the right of exercising force in self-defence belongs to the individual and is trans-

ferred by him to the State; but the moral pressure on the individual to transfer this right is overwhelming. Who of us would care to be judge and executioner at once in one's own person? Who would wish to exercise Lynch law?¹ What is to be gained thereby? It is not a question of right, for, as we have seen, the individual, who may exercise force in self-defence, can also transfer this exercise of his power, and if he can do this legally, is it not a hundred times better if he also does so actually? I willingly admit that, when it is solely a question of a group, even the group, as the source of law, may, if it wishes, organise its own defence, and isolate itself from the general organisation of other groups. But I do not admit that the group can also separate itself, when the question directly concerns other groups besides itself. I would not, for example, allow a group the right to conduct its sewers to a certain point in a stream, because this directly affects the interests of other groups at other points of the stream. The first group must come to an understanding with the other groups concerned; in other words, it must enter into a common organisation with other groups. Or again: group A decides to punish those who instigate to murder, while group B is of opinion that one need not trouble about words, but only about deeds. Such a difference of views and procedure is unimportant, so long as the members of group A merely associate with one another; but suppose a member of group B were to incite a person to murder a member of

¹ The answer is obvious: the inhabitants of Texas.

group A, it is clear that we should be confronted by a civil war between the two groups the moment that group A seeks to seize and punish the instigator. It also happens that in all cases where force has to be exercised against persons outside their own group as well as in it, some organisation must exist between the groups—a State—in order to determine the conditions under which force can be exercised. . . . For these reasons I consider pure Anarchy an impossibility; it rests upon a misunderstanding, and is founded upon the mingling of two things which are by nature entirely different. . . . Anarchy is the rule of an individual over himself; but the actions of an individual in self-defence, however just they may be, are not founded entirely upon self-ownership, but are of a mixed nature, since they include rule over one's self and over others. The object of Anarchy is self-government, but we exceed the sphere of self-government as soon as we stretch out our hand to exercise force. The error which pure Anarchists commit lies in the fact that they apply the ideas of self-government, self-ownership, or freedom to force. Between actions of freedom and actions involving force a line must necessarily be drawn, which separates them for ever. As far as concerns a question of free will, *e. g.*, the posting of letters, arrangements for education, all contracts of labour and capital, we can dispense with any authority; we can be Anarchists, because in these cases it is not necessary for me or for you to exercise or to undergo compulsion. We may leave the group whose actions we do not approve

of, we may stand alone as individuals, we may follow exclusively the law of our nature ; but the moment we proceed to measures of defence, to actions implying limitation or discipline, to actions which encroach upon the self-ownership of others, the whole state of things is altered. The moment force has to be exercised, an apparatus of force must be set up ; if we wish to exercise force, it must be publicly proclaimed, and we must publicly agree upon what conditions it is to be applied ; it must be surrounded by guarantees and so on. Force and the unconditional freedom of the individual, or Anarchy, are incompatible ideas, and therefore I am a Voluntarist, not an Anarchist—a Voluntarist in all questions where Voluntarism is admissible ; but I return into the State when by the nature of things some organisation is necessary."

Practically Auberon Herbert's distinction of terms is merely playing with words ; for the " voluntary State," which I can leave at any moment, from which I can withdraw my financial support if I do not approve of its actions, is Proudhon's federation of groups in its strictest form ; perhaps it is even the practical outcome of Stirner's *Union of Egoists* ; at any rate Herbert, like Stirner, prefers the unconditional acceptance of the principle of *laissez faire*, without reaching it, like Proudhon, by means of the thorny circumlocution of a complicated organisation of work. Carried into practice, Voluntarism would be as like Anarchism as two peas. None the less we must not undervalue the theoretical progress

shown in the distinction quoted above. Herbert approaches within a hair's-breadth of the standpoint of Sociology, and what separates him from it is not so much the logical accentuation of the social-contract theory as the indirect assumption of it.

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In America we find views similar to Auberon Herbert's.

The traces of Anarchist ideas in the United States go back as far as the fifties. Joseph Dejacque, an adherent of Proudhon, and compromised politically in 1848, edited in New York, from 1858-61, a paper, *Le Libertaire*, in which he at first preached the collective Anarchism of his master, but later—though long before Kropotkin—drifted into communist Anarchism.

Side by side there also arose, almost, as it seems, independently of Europe, an individualist school, the origin of which goes back somewhere to the beginning of the century. Here the ideas of a free society, such as Thompson had imagined and taught, found rapid and willing acceptance, and were expanded, by men like Josiah Warren, Stephen Pearl Andrews, Lysander Spooner, and others, to the idea of "individual sovereignty," which to-day possesses its most important champion in R. B. Tucker, the editor of the journal, *Liberty*, in Boston, and which approaches most closely to Herbert's idea of the "voluntary State."

PART III

THE RELATION OF ANARCHISM TO SCIENCE AND POLITICS



CHAPTER VII

ANARCHISM AND SOCIOLOGY: HERBERT SPENCER

Spencer's Views on the Organisation of Society—Society Conceived from the Nominalist and Realist Standpoint—The Idealism of Anarchists—Spencer's Work : *From Freedom to Restraint*.



HEN Vaillant was before his judges he mentioned Herbert Spencer, among others, as one of those from whom he had derived his Anarchist convictions. Anarchists refer not seldom to the gray-headed Master of Sociology as one of themselves; and still more often do the Socialists allude to him as an Anarchist. People like Laveleye, Lafarque, and (lately) Professor Enrico Ferri,¹ have allowed themselves to speak of Spencer's Anarchist and Individualist views in his book, *The Individual versus the State*. If Vaillant, the bomb-thrower, rejoiced in such ignorance of persons and things as to quote Spencer, without thinking, as a fellow-thinker, we need hardly say much about it; but when men who are regarded as authorities in

¹ *Socialismus und Moderne Wissenschaft*, p. 129. Leipsic, 1895.

so-called scientific Socialism, do the same, we can only perceive the small amount either of conscientiousness or science with which whole tendencies of the social movement are judged, and judged too by a party which, before all others, is interested in procuring correct and precise judgments on this matter. For those who number Herbert Spencer among the Anarchists, either do not understand the essence of Anarchism, or else do not understand Spencer's views; or both are to them a *terra incognita*.

As far as concerns the book, *The Individual versus the State* (London, 1885), this is really only a closely printed pamphlet of some thirty pages, in which Spencer certainly attacks Socialism severely as an endeavour to strengthen an organisation of society, based on compulsion, at the expense of individual freedom and of voluntary organisations already secured; but not a single Anarchist thought is to be found in his pages, unless any form of opposition to forcing human life into a social organisation of regimental severity is to be called Anarchism. We may remark *en passant* that here we have a splendid example of freedom of thought as understood by the Socialists; in their (so-called) free people's State the elements of Anarchism would assume a much more repulsive form than under the present *bourgeois* conditions. And that is just what Spencer prophesies in his little book.

Spencer appeals in this work to his views upon a possible organisation of society better than the present, as he has indicated in *The Study of Socio-*

logy, Political Institutions, and elsewhere ; and we think we ought to permit the appeal and present Spencer's views, not for the sake of Herbert Spencer—for we cannot undertake to defend everyone who is suspected of Anarchism,—but because he is the most important representative of a school of thought which some day or other will be called upon to say the last word in the scientific discussion of the so-called social question, and because we now wish to set forth clearly, once for all, what Anarchism is, in whatever disguise it may cloak itself, and what Anarchism is not, however far it may go in accentuating freedom of development.

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The quintessence of Spencer's views upon the organisation of society—the point from which the pamphlet so misused by Ferri proceeds—is something like this. The organisation which is the necessary preliminary to any form of united social endeavour is, whether regarded historically or *a priori*, not of a single but of a twofold nature, a nature essentially different both in origin and conditions. The one arises immediately from the pursuit of individual aims, and only contributes indirectly to the social welfare ; it develops unconsciously, and is not of a compulsory character. The other, which proceeds directly from the pursuit of social aims, and only contributes indirectly to the welfare of the individual, develops consciously, and is of a compulsory character (*cf. Principles*, iii., p. 447). Spencer calls the first, voluntary, organisation the

industrial type, because it always accompanies the appearance of industrial and commercial interests; but the second, compulsory, organisation the warlike type, because it is a consequence of the need of external defence for the community. The industrial type of Spencer, based upon the individualist sentiment, results in what we have come to know as convention; the military or warlike type, which addresses itself exclusively to altruistic feelings, leads to the State (status). The "social" question, when solved exclusively by the first method, we know already as Anarchy; solved by the second, it is Socialism in the narrower sense.

However much these two types may seem to exclude each other in their conception, and actually do so when translated into the jargon of party, in reality they are by no means mutually exclusive. Those forms of human society which we see both in the present and the past are by no means pure types, but show the most varied gradation and interpenetration of both types; according as the need for common defence or for individual interests comes to the fore, the military type, that rules and regulates everything, or the industrial, that aims at free union, will preponderate. The vast majority of all forms of society, including the modern Great Powers, are still of the military type, for obvious reasons. The "idea of the State" is powerful within them, but only some of the most advanced, which from their peculiar circumstances are less threatened by the danger of war, and therefore devote themselves more largely to industry and commerce, such as

England and America, are now inclining more to the industrial type.

Which of the two forms deserves the preference cannot, of course, be determined *a priori*. Spencer gives it evidently to the industrial type, as being a higher form of development, and he thinks that, in the more or less distant future, this will acquire the supremacy (*Principles*, iii., § 577). But he recognises also, as was only to be expected, that it has only rarely been possible to dispense with the military and compulsory organisation, whether in the present or the past, and that even in the future it will still in many cases be necessary for social development according to local conditions; and that accordingly a universal acceptance of co-operative work by convention, on the Anarchist's plan, cannot be imagined as possible, because, in social organisms as well as in individual organisms, the development of higher forms by no means implies the extirpation of lower forms. If we miss already, at this point, one of the most essential traits of Anarchist doctrine, viz., its absolute character, Spencer's so-called Anarchism shrinks still more into nothingness, when we approach the industrial type as he describes it in its complete state.

While the requirements of the industrial type (he says) simply exclude a despotic authority, they demand on the other hand, as the only suitable means of carrying out the requisite actions of common benefit, an assembly of representatives to express the will of the whole body. The duty of this controlling agency, which may be denoted in general

terms as the administration of justice, merely consists in seeing that every citizen receives neither more nor less benefit than his own efforts normally afford him. Hence public efforts to effect any artificial division of the result of labour is of itself excluded. When the *régime* peculiar to militarism, the status, has disappeared, the *régime* of convention appears in its stead, and finds more and more general acceptance, and this forbids any disturbance of the relations of exchange between the performance and the product of labour by arbitrary division. Looked at from another standpoint, the industrial type is distinguished from the military by the fact that it has a regulating influence, not simultaneously, both positive and negative, but only negative (*cf. Principles*, iii., § 575). In this ever-increasing limitation of the influence of constituted society lies another sharply defined line of demarcation, from even the most conservative forms of Anarchism, whether it be Proudhon's federal society or Auberon Herbert's "voluntary State." For Spencer recognises even for the most perfect form of his society the necessity of some administration of law; he speaks of a Head of the State, even though he be merely elected (*Principles*, § 578); he would like to see development continued along the beaten track of the representative system (which the Anarchists mainly reject), and even in certain circumstances would retain the principle of a second chamber (*ib.*, p. 770). For however high may be the degree of development reached by an industrial society, yet the difference between high and low, between rulers

and ruled, can never be done away with. All the new improvements which the coming centuries may have in store for industry cannot fail to admit the contrast between those whose character and abilities raise them to a higher rank and those who remain in a lower sphere. Even if any mode of production and distribution of goods was carried out exclusively by corporations of labourers working together, as is done even now in some cases to a certain extent, yet all such corporations must have their chief directors and their committees of administration. A Senate might then be formed either from an elective body that was taken, not from a class possessing permanent privileges, but from a group including all leaders of industrial associations, or it might be formed from an electorate consisting of all persons who took an active share in the administration; and finally it might be so composed as to include the representatives of all persons engaged in governing, as distinguished from the second chamber of representatives of the governed.

Moreover, Spencer himself claims no sort of dogmatic obligatory force for these deductions with regard to the most favourable possible form of future organisation; rather he expressly warns us that different organisations are possible, by means of which the general agreement of the whole community in sentiment and views might make itself felt, and declares that it is rather a question of expediency than of principle which of the different possible organisations should finally be accepted (*Principles*, p. 766).

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Incomprehensible as it may seem that Spencer, holding such views, should be regarded as an Anarchist, and that too by men who ought to have understood him as well as the Anarchists, yet this has been the case. Therefore we must guard against his lack of Radicalism (as shown in the foregoing remarks) being regarded by various parties less as a necessary result of his first premises than as the result of personal qualities of opportunism, of a lack of courage in facing the ultimate consequences of his reasoning. We should like, therefore, briefly to note the wide differences which separate the purely sociological standpoint of Spencer from the unscientific standpoint of the Anarchists.

It may be considered as indifferent whether we are accustomed to regard society as a natural thing or only as a product of my thought, as something real and concrete or as a mere conception, and yet the range of this first assumption far surpasses the value of academic contention. No bridge leads from one of these standpoints to the other, and as deep a gulf separates the conclusions which are drawn from these premises. If society is a thing, something actual like the individual, then it is subject to the same laws as the rest of nature; it changes and develops, grows and decays, like all else. If, on the other hand, it is a mere conception, then it stands and falls with myself, with my wish to set it up or destroy it. Indeed, if society is nothing but an idea, a child of my thought, what hinders me from throwing it away as soon as I have recognised its nothingness, since it is no more use to me?

Have not some already done so with the idea of God, because they thought it merely a product of their own mind? Here we may remember Stirner's argument, which was only rendered possible because he placed society upon exactly the same level as the Deity, *i. e.*, regarding both as mere conceptions. But, on the other hand, if society exists apart from me, apart from my thought about it, then it will also develop without reference to my personal opinions, views, ideas, or wishes. In other words: if society is nothing but the summary idea of certain institutions, such as the family, property, religion, law, and so on, then society stands or falls with their sanctity, expediency and utility; and to deny these institutions is to deny society itself. On the other hand, if society is the aggregate of individuals forming it, then the institutions just mentioned are only functions of this collective body, and the denial or abolition of them means certainly a disturbance, though not an annihilation of society. Society then can no more be got rid of, as long as there are individuals, than matter or force. We can destroy or upset an aggregation, but can never hinder the individuals composing it from again uniting to form another aggregation.

From these two divergent points of view follows the endless series of irreconcilable divergencies between Realists and Idealists. For the former, evolution is a process that is accomplished quite unconsciously, and is determined exclusively by the condition at any time of the elements forming the aggregate, and their varying relations. The Idealist

also likes to talk of an evolution of society, but since this is only the evolution of an idea, there can be no contradiction, and it is only right and fair for him to demand that this evolution should be accomplished in the direction of other and (as he thinks) higher ideas, the realisation of which is the object of society. So he comes to demand that society should realise the ideas of Freedom, Equality, and the like. A society which does not wish, or is unfitted to do this, can and must be overthrown and annihilated.

When we hear these destructive opinions, which are continually spreading, characterised as a lack of idealism, we cannot restrain a smile at the confusion of thought thus betrayed. As a matter of fact, the social revolutionaries of the present day, and especially the Anarchists, are idealists of the first rank, and that too not merely because of their nominalist way of regarding society, but they are idealists also in a practical sense. The society of the present is in their eyes utterly bad and incapable of improvement, because it does not correspond to the ideas of freedom and equality. But the fault of this does not lie in men as such, or in their natural attributes and defects, but in society, that is (since it is merely an idea), in the faulty conceptions and prejudices which men have as to the value of society. Men in themselves are good, noble, and possess the most brotherly sentiments; and not only that, but they are diligent and industrious from an innate impulse; society alone has spoiled them. These assumptions we have seen in all Anarchists; they are the inevit-

able premises of their ideal of the future, an ideal of a free, just, and brotherly form of society; but they are the necessary consequence of the first assumption, of the idealist conception of society itself, which is common to all Anarchists, with the single exception of Proudhon, whose peculiarities and contradictions we have dealt with above.

Herbert Spencer, and with him the sociological school generally, cannot of course accept the conclusions of a premise which they do not assume. Comparative study of the life of primitive races, scientific anthropology, and exact psychology, all show this well-meaning assumption to be a mere delusion. Philoneism may be nobler and more humane, but, unfortunately, it is only misoneism that is true. Generally speaking, every man only works in order to avoid unpleasantness. One man is urged on by his experience that hunger hurts him, the other by the whip of the slave-driver. What he fears is either the punishment of circumstances, or the punishment given by someone set over him (*cf.* Spencer, *From Freedom to Restraint*, p. 8). Work is the enemy of man; he struggles with it because he must do so in order to live; his life is a continual struggle but not (as all the Anarchists from Proudhon down to Grave try to persuade themselves and others) a united struggle of man against nature, but a struggle of men one against the other, a murderous, fratricidal conflict, from which in the end only the most suitable and capable emerges ("the survival of the fittest"). Short-sighted people and one-sided doctrinaires can

never be convinced of the fact that in this brutal fact lies not only the end but also the proper beginning of unfeigned morality. And so too in social relations. Conflict, war, and persecution stand at the beginning of every civilisation and every social development; but the ceaseless hostilities of man with man have populated the earth from pole to pole with those who are most capable, powerful, and most fitted for evolution; we owe to man's hatred and fear of work the rich blessings of civilisation; and only from the swamp of servitude can spring the flower of freedom.

But we must return once more to our idealists.

According to the view common to all Anarchists, the fault of our present circumstances, which scorn freedom and equality, lies not in the natural limitation of mankind, but in the limitation entailed upon him by society, that is, by his own faulty conceptions and ideas. It is therefore only a question of convincing men that they hitherto have erred, that they should see in the State their enemy and not their protector and champion—and the world is at once turned upside down “like an omelet,” society as now constituted is annihilated, and Anarchy is triumphant. Anarchists since Bakunin are of the opinion that, in order to reach this end, there is no need of weary evolution or of an education of the human race for Anarchy; on the contrary, it can be set up at once, immediately, with these same men; it merely requires the trifling circumstance that men should be convinced of its truth. Therefore they despise every political

means, and their whole strategy, not excepting the propaganda of action, only aims at convincing men of the nothingness of society as such, and of the harm done by its institution. This fact can only be understood in view of the purely idealist starting-point from which the Anarchists proceed. The man to whom society is a fact, a reality, only recognises an evolution that excludes any sudden leap, and above all, the leap into annihilation.

A radical error (as Herbert Spencer remarks in the very book which Ferri adduces as a proof of his Anarchist tendency) which prevails in the mode of thought of almost all political and social parties, is the delusion that there exist immediate and radical remedies for the evils that oppress us. "Only do thus, and the evil will disappear"; or "act according to my method and want will cease"; or "by such and such regulations the trouble will undoubtedly be removed"—everywhere we meet such fancies, or modes of action resulting from them. But the foundation of them is wrong. You may remove causes that increase the evil, you may change one evil into another, and you may, as frequently occurs, even increase the evil by trying to cure it: but an immediate cure is impossible. In the course of centuries mankind, owing to the increase of numbers, has been compelled to expand from the original, ancient condition, wherein small groups of men supported themselves upon the free gifts of nature, into a civilised condition, in which the things necessary to support life for such great masses can only be acquired by ceaseless toil. The nature of man in

this latter mode of existence is very different from what it was in the first period; and centuries of pain have been necessary to transform it sufficiently. A human constitution that is no longer in harmony with its environment is necessarily in a miserable position, and a constitution inherited from primitive man does not harmonise with the circumstances to which those of to-day have to adapt themselves. Consequently it is impossible to create immediately a social condition that shall bring happiness to all. A state of society which even to-day fills Europe with millions of armed warriors, eager for conquest or thirsting for revenge; which impels so-called Christian nations to vie with one another all over the world in piratical enterprises without any regard to the rights of the aborigines, while thousands of their priests and pastors watch them with approval; which, in intercourse with weaker races, goes far beyond the primitive law of revenge, "a life for a life," and for one life demands seven—such a state of human society, says Spencer, cannot under any circumstances be ripe for a harmonious communal existence. The root of every well-ordered social activity is the sense of justice, resting, on the one hand, on personal freedom, and, on the other on the sanctity of similar freedom for others; and this sense of justice is so far not present in sufficient quantity. Therefore a further and longer continuance of a social discipline is necessary, which demands from each that he should look after his own affairs with due regard to the equal rights of others, and insists that everyone shall enjoy all the pleasures

which naturally flow from his efforts, and, at the same time, not place upon the shoulders of others the inconveniences that arise from the same cause, in so far as others are not ready to undertake them. And therefore it is Spencer's conviction that the attempts to remove this form of discipline will not only fail, but will produce worse evils than those which it is sought to avoid.

We need not discuss Spencer's views further in a book about Anarchism. But to those representatives of so-called scientific Socialism, as well as to those Liberals who are so ready to condemn as "Anarchist" any inconvenient critic of their own opinions, we should like to remark that Anarchism will only be overcome by free and fearless scientific treatment, and not by violent measures dictated by stupidity and hatred.

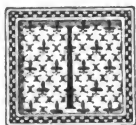




CHAPTER VIII

THE SPREAD OF ANARCHISM IN EUROPE

First Period (1867-1880)—The Peace and Freedom League—The Democratic Alliance and the Jurassic Bund—Union with and Separation from the "International"—The Rising at Lyons—Congress at Lausanne—The Members of the Alliance in Italy, Spain, and Belgium—Second Period (from 1880)—The German Socialist Law—Johann Most—The London Congress—French Anarchism since 1880—Anarchism in Switzerland—The Geneva Congress—Anarchism in Germany and Austria—Joseph Penkert—Anarchism in Belgium and England—Organisation of the Spanish Anarchists—Italy—Character of Modern Anarchism—The Group—Numerical Strength of the Anarchism of Action.



It is the custom to represent Bakunin as the St. Paul of modern Anarchism. It may be so. The Anarchism of violence only acquired significance, owing to later circumstances in which Bakunin had no share; but the kind of prelude of the Anarchist movement, which was noticeable at the end of the sixties and beginning of the seventies, may certainly be attributed to the influence of Bakunin.

With the growth of the organisation of the pro-

letariat in its international relations in the second half of the sixties, it was only too readily understood that a part of this organisation rested upon an Anarchist basis, especially as the opposition to the social democratic tendency had not yet been developed in practice. Among workmen using the Romance languages, the free-collectivist doctrines of Proudhon gained much ground; prominent labour journals, such as the Geneva *Egalité*, the *Progrès du Locle*, and others, often represented these views, and Switzerland especially was the chief country in which the working classes had always inclined to radical opinions. We call to mind, for example, the union of handicraftsmen of the forties, the Young Germany, and the *Lemanbund* (Lake of Geneva Union) which had been led by Marr and Döleke, to however small an extent, into an Anarchist channel. The same field was open to Bakunin as suitable for his operations, after he had long enough sought for one.

After his return from his Siberian exile, Bakunin had looked out for an organisation, by the help of which he could translate his Anarchist ideas into action and agitation, the which were the proper domain of his spirit. When, after restless wanderings, he came from Italy into Switzerland, it appeared as if this wish were to be fulfilled.

In Geneva there happened to be a meeting of the Peace Congress, which then had merely philanthropic aims, and was attended by members of the most diverse classes of society and most different nations. Bakunin hoped to win over to his ideas this company, consisting for the most part of ami-

able enthusiasts, doctrinaires and congress haunters, and to create in it a background for his own activity. He, therefore, appeared at the Congress and made a speech that was highly applauded in which he came to the conclusion that international peace was impossible as long as the following principle, together with all its consequences, was not accepted; namely: "Every nation, feeble or strong, small or great, every province, every community has the absolute right to be free and autonomous, to live according to its interests and private needs and to rule itself; and in this right all communities and all nations have a certain solidarity to the extent that this principle cannot be violated for one of them without at the same time involving all the others in danger. So long as the present centralised States exist, universal peace is impossible; we must, therefore, wish for their dismemberment, in order that, on the ruins of these unities based on force and organised from above downwards by despotism and conquest, free unities organised from below upwards may develop as a free federation of communities with provinces, provinces with nations, and nations with the united States of Europe." In another speech at the same Congress he sums up the principles upon which alone peace and justice rest, in the following:—(1) "The abolition of everything included in the term of 'the historic and political necessity of the State,' in the name of any larger or smaller, weak or strong population, as well as in the name of all individuals who are said to have full power to dispose of themselves in complete freedom

independently of the needs and claims of the State, wherein this freedom ought only to be limited by the equal rights of others; (2) Annuling of all the permanent contracts between the individual and the collective unity, associations, departments or nations; in other words, every individual must have the right to break any contract, even if entered into freely; (3) Every individual, as well as every association, province and nation, must have the right to quit any union or alliance, with, however, the express condition that the party thus leaving it must not menace the freedom and independence of the State which it has left by alliance with a foreign power."

Although these utterances of the wily agitator implied a complete diversion of the views of the Congress from purely philanthropic intentions to open Collectivist Anarchism, yet they found support in the numerous radical elements which took part in the Congress.

Bakunin, who now settled in Switzerland, was elected a permanent member of the Central Committee of the newly-founded "Peace and Freedom League," with its headquarters in Bern, and he prepared for it his "proposal" already mentioned. Bakunin was feverishly active in trying to lead the League into an Anarchist channel. Already in the session of the Bern Central Committee, he proposed to the committee, with the support of Ogarjow, Jukowsky, the Poles Mrockowski and Zagorski, and the Frenchman Naquet, to accept a programme similar to that which he had laid before the Geneva

Congress. Then he carried, by the aid of this submissive committee, a resolution, demanding the affiliation of the League with the International Union of Workers. But this demand of the League was refused by the congress of the "International" at Brussels; but, already greatly compromised by its position in regard to the League, the "International" still further left the path of safety when Bakunin recommended his Socialist programme to the congress of the League which sat at Bern in 1868. Bakunin found himself in the minority, retired from the congress, and, with a small band of faithful adherents, including the brothers Réclus, Albert Richard, Jukowsky, mentioned above, and others, betook himself to Geneva.

These faithful followers formed the nucleus of the Socialist Democratic Alliance formed in Geneva in 1868, the first society with avowedly Anarchist tendencies. We have already quoted its official programme. It is an unimportant variation of Proudhon's Collectivism. The "Alliance" was a union of public societies, as far as possible autonomous federations, such as the Jurassic Bund; and, like the "International," it was divided into a central committee and national bureaus. But together with this division went a secret organisation. Bakunin, the pronounced enemy of all organisations in theory, created in practice a secret society quite according to the rules of Carbonarism—a hierarchy which was in total contradiction to the anti-authority tendencies of the society. According to the secret statutes of the "Alliance" three grades were recognised—

(1) "The International Brethren," one hundred in number, who formed a kind of sacred college, and were to play the leading parts in the soon expected, immediate social revolution, with Bakunin at their head. (2) "The National Brethren," who were organised by the International Brethren into a national association in every country, but who were allowed to suspect nothing of the international organisation. (3) Lastly came the secret international alliance, the pendant to the public alliance, operating through the permanent Central Committee.

If the "Alliance" made rapid progress in the first year of its existence, and quickly spread into Switzerland, the South of France, and large parts of Spain and Italy, and even found adherents in Belgium and Russia, this was certainly not due to the playing at secret societies affected by the International Brethren. It is probably not a mistake to see in the growth of the first Anarchist organisation first and foremost a natural reaction against the stiff rule of the London General Council; but at the same time the Anarchism of Proudhon contained (contradictory as it may sound) in many respects an element of moderation, and was far more adapted to the limits of the *bourgeois* intellect than the tendencies of the Social Democracy, which demand a full participation in party interests and party life. Just as we find later, so also we find now at the time of the "Alliance," numerous elements in the Anarchist ranks belonging to the superior artisan and lower middle class. We therefore find strong Anarchist influences even within the "International" before

the "Alliance" flourished. Thus one of the main events of the Brussels Congress early in September, 1868, was a proposal of Albert Richard, a follower of Bakunin, to found a bank of mutual credit and exchange quite after the manner of Proudhon. In the discussion upon it prominent representatives of Anarchist ideas took part, such as Eccarius, Tolain, and others. The Congress, however, buried the proposed statute in its sections—the last honor for Proudhon's much harassed project.

But in the congress of the next year the Anarchists made quite another kind of influence felt. In the meantime the "Alliance" had been absorbed in the "International." A first attempt of Bakunin to affiliate the "Alliance" to the great international association of workmen, and thereby to secure for himself a leading part in it, was a failure. The General Council, in which the influence of the clever agitator was evidently feared, refused in December, 1868, to associate itself with the "Alliance." Some months later the "Alliance" again approached the General Council upon the question of affiliation, and declared itself ready to fulfil all its conditions. The chief of these was the dissolution of the "Alliance" as such and the division of its sections into those of the "International," as well as the abolition of its secret organisation. Thereupon the Bakuninist sections were in July, 1869, declared to be "International," although in London it was never believed that the members of the "Alliance" would keep the conditions. Not only the Central Committee continued as before, but also the secret organisation and

Bakunin's leadership. If the amalgamation of both parties was at length completed, it only happened because at this stage each was in need of the other, and perhaps feared the other. But the very origin of the union, as will readily be understood, did not permit it to work together very harmoniously. And, moreover, apart from the main points of difference, there were also a series of minor divergencies of opinion, chiefly on the subject of tactics. The followers of Marx strove for greater centralisation of the directorate, the Bakuninists more for the autonomy of the separate sections. The men of the General Council eagerly urged the adoption of universal suffrage as the most prominent means of agitation for the purpose of proletariat emancipation; Bakunin entirely rejected any political action, including the exercise of the suffrage, since, in his opinion, this would only become an instrument of reaction, and since the workers could only use their rights by force and not votes. It will be easily understood that the result of such differences of opinion was a sharp divergence inside the "International" between the "Marxists" and "Bakuninists"—a divergence that became irremediable at the Basle Congress of 1869. At this Congress the "Alliance" succeeded, if not in securing a decisive majority, yet in obtaining sufficient influence to give the Congress a decidedly Anarchist character.

As the first item on the programme, the Belgian Proudhonist, De Pæpe, proposed to the Congress to declare (1) that society had the right to abolish individual ownership in the land, and give it back to

the community; (2) that it was necessary to make the land common property. Albert Richard vehemently opposed individual ownership as the source of all social inequalities and all poverty. "It arose from force and from unlawful seizure, and it must disappear: and property in land must be regulated by the federally organised communes." Bakunin himself supported De Pæpe's proposal; but it is not hard to understand that opposition made itself felt in the Anarchist ranks. Several pronounced Anarchists, especially Murat and Tolain, supported individual property with great decision and warmth. Nevertheless De Pæpe's Collectivist proposal was accepted by fifty-four (or fifty-three) votes to four.

But the Bakuninists did not gain the same success in the next question, concerning the right of inheritance. This was a question quite characteristic of Bakunin. The proposal ran:

"In consideration of the fact that inheritance as an inseparable element in individual ownership contributes to the alienation of property in land and of social riches for the benefit of the few and the hurt of the majority; that consequently inheritance hinders land and social wealth from becoming common property: that, on the other hand, inheritance, however limited its operation may be, forms a privilege, the greater or lesser importance of which does not remove injustice, and continually threatens social rights; that, further, inheritance, whether it appears either in politics or economics, forms an essential element in all inequalities, because it hinders the individual having the same means of moral

and material development; considering, finally, that the Congress has pronounced in favour of collective property in land, and that this declaration would be illogical if it were not strengthened by this following declaration: the Congress recognises that inheritance must be completely and absolutely abolished, and its abolition is one of the most necessary conditions of the emancipation of labour."

One might have believed that a congress which had calmly agreed to the abolition of individual property in land could have no objection to make to the abolition of such an "unequal" and "feudal" institution as inheritance. But it appears that it was desired to let Bakunin (whose hobby the struggle against inheritance was well known to be) plainly see that the Congress wished to have none of him, although they had not ventured to oppose the views of his adherents upon the far more important question. The proposal only received thirty-two votes for it, twenty-three against it, and seventeen delegates refrained from voting. Therefore the resolution was lost, since it could not obtain a decisive majority.

This procedure of the Basle Congress was calculated to embitter both parties. Open rupture could not be long delayed. Already, at the Romance Congress¹ at Chaux-de-Fonds on April 4, 1870, the admission of the Bakuninist sections had raised a

¹ The first groups of the "International" in the Romance-speaking portions of Switzerland had increased so quickly that at a congress in Geneva in 1869 they united themselves into a league of their own, the "Romance Federation," in harmony with the "International," to which members of the "Alliance" and Marxists belonged in almost equal numbers.

veritable storm—twenty-one delegates voting for the admission, and eighteen against it, and the latter withdrew immediately from the Congress in consequence of the decision. Nevertheless, at this Congress Bakunin's views practically prevailed, for the Congress declared in favour of taking part in politics, and putting up working-men candidates at elections as a means of agitation.

The day on which the Third Republic was proclaimed in Paris (the 4th September, 1870) was considered by the "Alliance" to be the right moment "to unchain the hydra of Revolution." This was first done in Switzerland, where manifestoes were issued calling to the formation of a free corps against the Prussians. The manifestoes were seized, and the head of the revolutionary hydra cut off, as far as Switzerland was concerned. On September 28th, Bakunin tried to organise a riot at Lyons. Albert Richard, Bastelica, and Gaspard Blanc began it; the mob took possession of the Town Hall; Bakunin installed himself there, and decreed "abolition of the State." He had perhaps hoped that the example of Lyons would encourage other cities in the circumstances then prevailing, and these would likewise declare themselves to be free communes, and the State to be abolished. But the State,—as the opponents of the "Alliance" maliciously said,—in the shape of two companies of the National Guard, found a way into Lyons through a gate which the rioters had forgotten to watch, swept the Anarchists out of the Town Hall, and caused Bakunin to seek his way back to Geneva in great haste.

This intermezzo, the only historical moment which the "Alliance" had, did not, of course, contribute to strengthen any friendship between the Bakuninists and Marxists. The latter had a suitable excuse for shaking off Bakunin, and making the Anarchists subservient to them. In the conference at London (September, 1871) the sections of the Jura were recommended to join the "Romance Union," and in case this was not done, the conference determined the mountain sections should unite into the Jurassic Federation. The conference passed a severe resolution against Bakunin's tactics, and a resolution against Netschajew's proceedings was also really directed against the leader of the "Alliance."

Bakunin was right in taking this as a declaration of war, and his followers accepted the challenge. On November 12, 1871, the Jura sections met at a congress in Souvillier, in which they certainly accepted the name "Jurassic Union," but declared the "Romance Union" to be dissolved; appealed against the decisions of the London Conference as well as against their legality, and appealed to a general congress, to be called immediately.

These endless disputes came to a climax at the congress held at The Hague in 1872, when Bakunin was excluded from the "International"; whereupon the Anarchist sections finally separated from the Social Democrats, and in the same year called an "International Labour Congress" at St. Imier. Here a provisional union of "Anti-Authority Socialists" was resolved upon, and it was decided (1) that the annihilation of every political power was

the first duty of the proletariat; (2) that every organisation of the political power, both provisory and revolutionary, was merely a delusion, and was as dangerous for the proletariat as any of the Governments now existing. In the following year, 1873, another congress took place at Geneva, which founded a new "International," which placed all power completely in the hands of the sections, while the "Bureau" only was to serve as a link between the autonomous unions, and to give information.

This first international Anarchist organisation never became of practical importance; only the "Jurassic Union" formed for almost ten years a much feared centre of Anarchism in Romance-speaking Switzerland and Southern France. Indeed it became the cradle of the "Anarchism of action" generally. "The Jura Federation,"¹ wrote Kropotkin, "has played a most important part in the development of the revolutionary idea. If, in speaking of Anarchy to-day, we can say that there are three thousand Anarchists in Lyons, and five thousand in the valley of the Rhone, and several thousands in the South, that is the work mainly of the Jura Federation. Indeed I must ask, How was this possible? Is Anarchy in Europe only ten years old? Of course the *Zeitgeist* has carried us along with it; but this was first openly manifest in a group, the Jura Federation, which thus must gain credit for it." The Jurassic Union was in fact the Anarchist party. The head and soul of this union was the Bakuninist, Paul Brousse, a zealous and reck-

¹ *Révolte*, July 8, 1862.

less Anarchist and clever journalist, who in his paper *Avantgarde* was one of the first to preach the "propaganda of action." In December, 1878, this paper was suppressed by the Swiss Government because it had approved the attempts of Hödel and Nobeling. Brousse himself was arrested and condemned to two months' imprisonment and ten years' banishment, but after undergoing his imprisonment he completely gave up Anarchism. Kropotkin, who had already helped him with the *Avantgarde*, took his place, and founded in Geneva the *Révolution*, directing with a feverish activity the work originally begun by Bakunin into new channels, and afterwards doing so from London.

In the year 1876 the French Anarchists at the congress at Lausanne had finally separated themselves from every party, by declaring the Parisian Commune to be only another form of government by authority. The congress of 1878 at Freiburg was of similar importance. Elisée Reclus moved for the appointment of a commission, which was to answer the following questions: (1) "Why we are revolutionaries"; (2) "Why we are Anarchists"; (3) "Why we are Collectivists." "We are revolutionaries," said Reclus, "because we desire justice. Progress has never been marked by mere peaceful development; it has always been called forth by a sudden resolution. We are Anarchists, and as such recognise no master. Morality resides only in freedom. We are international Collectivists, because we perceive that an existence without social grouping is impossible." The Congress accepted Reclus's mo-

tion, and decided (1) in favour of the general appropriation of social wealth; (2) for the abolition of the State in any form, even in that of a so-called central point of public administration. Further, the Congress declared in favour of the propaganda of theory, of insurrectionary and revolutionary activity, and against universal suffrage, since this was not adapted to secure the sovereignty of the multitude.

At a congress held in the following year (1879) at Chaux-de-Fonds, Kropotkin definitely urged the policy of the propaganda of action, and the Anarchist Labour Congress at Marseilles in the same year declared itself unhesitatingly in favour of universal expropriation. At the next Swiss Anarchist Congress in 1880 Kropotkin finally demanded the abolition of the term "Collectivism" which had hitherto been retained, and proposed to replace it by the term "Anarchist Communism."

Here we can see, even upon a point of theory, the deep divergence which was proceeding at this time. Hitherto Anarchism—and at least in this first period of its development we can speak of a party—has proceeded quite on the lines of Proudhon's Collectivism. Its main representative is the "Alliance," or rather Michael Bakunin, and after him the Juristic Federation. This period is, with the exception of a few revolutionary attempts, free from outrage and crime. But all this was changed at the London Congress. Before speaking of this, however, we must just glance at the branches of the "Alliance" in Spain, Italy, and elsewhere.

The Italian peninsula has always been one of the

chief centres of Anarchism. It has been said that this is the fault of the weakness and deficiency of the police, although the Italian Government repeatedly, both in 1866 and 1876, and again recently, has required and supported the strengthening of the executive power in every possible way against certain phenomena of political and social passion. The police alone, whether zealous or lax, is here, as elsewhere, only the most subordinate factor in history. But if we remember the proletariat that swarms in the numerous cities of Italy, in its economic misery and moral degradation; if we consider the peculiar tendency of this nation towards political crime and the paraphernalia of secret conspiracy; if we remember the days of the Carbonari, the Black Brothers, the Acoltellatori, and others,—we shall find in Italy, quite apart from the police and their work, sufficient other reasons for the growth of Anarchism.

During the war of independence, revolutionary literature in general, and especially the works of Herzen and Michael Bakunin, had a great sale among the younger generation, and so it came to pass that the idea of nationalism was imperceptibly fostered by Socialist and Nihilist influences. The leading part taken by a number of Italian revolutionaries, especially Cipriani,—afterwards the leader of the Apennine Anarchists,—in the Commune of 1871, contributed very considerably to promote Socialist demagoguery in the revolutionary centres of Italy, in the Romagna, and the Marches. Closer contact with Bakunin proved to be the decisive touch.

In those memorable days when the "International" separated into two heterogeneous parts, we already find the majority of the Italian Socialists adopting the standpoint of Bakunin ; indeed the Italians, even before the Hague Congress, took sides in favour of Bakunin against the " Authority-Communists " of Marx. This first Anarchist movement became no more important in Italy than elsewhere, and an attempt at riot in April, 1877, near Benevento, headed by Cafiero and Malatesta, gave an impression of childishness and comicality rather than of menace. It was put down by a handful of soldiers ; Malatesta and Cafiero were taken prisoners, but set free. The severe repressive measures afterwards adopted by the Government kept Anarchism down for some time.

In Spain, also, at the beginning of the seventies, there was—as was the case with all the Romance countries—a strong Bakuninist party, which was said to have amounted to 50,000 men in 1873. During the Federalist risings the Anarchists made common cause with the Intransigents, and succeeded in taking possession of several cities for a short time. Their successes, however, did not last long, and they were only able to hold out till 1874 in New Carthagena, where they had finally to surrender after a regular siege by the Government troops. The Anarchist societies and newspapers were suppressed, and the severest measures taken against Anarchists, which only roused them to the most sanguinary form of propaganda. The Anarchists declared that if they were to be treated as wild

beasts, they would act as such, and cause death and destruction to the Government and to any existing form of society at any time, in any place, and by any means.

In Belgium about this period there was also a great increase of Proudhonish Anarchism, which, later on, as in Switzerland, Italy, and Spain, attached itself to Bakunin, and at the congress at The Hague formed the centre of the opposition to the Marxists. The rapid growth of Social Democracy in Belgium during the second half of the seventies almost extinguished Anarchism there.

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If we wish to characterise briefly this first period of the Anarchism of action, a period terminated decisively by the year 1880, we should define it as the process of separation between the Socialist and the Anarchist tendency. Karl Marx, who had already come into opposition with the "Father of Anarchism," and had attacked his "philosophy of want" with the bitter criticism of "want of philosophy," noted the far greater danger which threatened Socialism from the clever agitator Bakunin, and entered into a life-and-death struggle against him. Although there was a large personal element in this conflict, it was really more than a personal struggle between two opponents. There was a deep division among the proletariat themselves, separating them—unconsciously for the most part—into two great and irreconcilable camps; the first battle had been fought, and the result was decidedly not in favour of the Anarchists. Towards the end of

the seventies we notice everywhere, except perhaps in France, where social parties were strongly marked, a remarkable retrogression in Anarchism. It appeared as if, after playing the part of an episode, it was to disappear from the political stage.

In view of the fact that the history both of practical and theoretical Anarchism is a history pure and simple of the most violent opposition to Social Democracy inside its own camp, it shows both ignorance and unfairness to make Socialists bear the blame of Anarchist propaganda. It is undeniable that Anarchism can only flourish where Socialism is generally prevalent. But that does not imply much, and no special wisdom is needed to find the reason for this phenomenon. But that is all. It is just as indisputable a fact, that Anarchism only flourishes where Social Democracy is feeble, divided, and weak, and that it always is unsuccessful in its efforts where the Social Democratic party is strong and united, as in Germany. All attempts to plant Anarchism in Germany have failed, not because of the preventive and repressive measures of the Government, but because of the strength of the party of Social Democracy. In England where there is a Socialist movement among the working classes, with a definite aim, Anarchism has remained merely an imported article; in Austria both parties have for years fought fiercely, and in proportion as one rises the other sinks. In Italy there are notorious centres of the Anarchism of action in Leghorn, Lugo, Forli, Rome, and Sicily. In Milan and Turin, where Social Democracy has established itself on the German

pattern, and has great influence among the lower classes, there are hardly any "Anarchists of action." On the other hand, France, where the Socialist party by being broken up into numerous small fragments is condemned to lose its influence, is the headquarters of Anarchism. But anyone who is not satisfied with these facts need only look at the causes of the most significant turning-points which the history of modern Anarchism has to offer, the London Congress of 1881, when the Anarchism of action raised its Gorgon head, officially adopted the programme of the propaganda of action, when the system of groups in every country was accepted, and that era of outrages began which, instead of promoting the work of the self-improvement of society, rather alienates it under the pressure of a dreadful terrorism. To-day a small group, which in number hardly equals a single one of the famous twelve nationalities of Austria, has succeeded in making the whole world talk of them, while the parliaments of every nation pass their laws with reference to this group, and often in aiming their blows against Anarchists strike those who are merely followers of a natural evolution.

And, it may be asked, On what day or by what act was so fortunate a chance offered to Anarchism? The occasion was the German Socialist law. This fact is indisputable.

It was only in the natural order of things that, in 1878, when the German policy of force happened partially to paralyse the legal agitation of the Social Democrats by exceptional legislation, a radical group

arose among the Socialist working classes which, led by the agitator Most, always an extremist, and Hasselmann, drew from these circumstances the lesson that now, being excluded from constitutional agitation, they must devote all their powers to prepare for revolution. This preparation, Most declared, should consist in the arming of all Socialists, energetic secret agitation to excite the masses, and, above all, revolutionary acts and outrages. The agitation was to be carried on by quite small groups of at most five men. Like Bakunin, Most, who, on being expelled from Berlin early in 1879, emigrated to London, where he founded his journal *Freedom*, had gone on in advance of the general Socialist movement, and for a time proceeded with it; but, like Bakunin too, he had been disowned and violently attacked by the Social Democratic party, when he showed the Anarchist in him so openly. The immediate consequence of Most and Hasselmann's programme was the formal expulsion of both agitators from the party by the secret congress at Wyden, near Ossingen, in Switzerland.

But just because of the disposition engendered by the Socialist law, this decision was quite powerless to stifle the Most and Hasselmann movement. On the contrary, Most's following grew from day to day, aided in no small degree by his paper *Freedom*, written in the glowing language of the demagogue, and now calling itself openly an "Anarchist organ." When Most came to London, he soon took the lead of the "Social Democratic Working Men's Club," then a thousand strong, the majority of which, after

the separation of the more moderate members who did not like the new programme, went over to Most's side. From these adherents Most formed an organisation of the "United Socialists," in which the "International" was to be revived again upon the most radical basis. The seat of this organisation was to be London, and from thence a Central Committee of seven persons was to look after the linking together of revolutionary societies abroad. Side by side with this public organisation, Most formed a secret "Propagandist Club," to carry on an international revolutionary agitation and to prepare directly for the general revolution which Most thought was near at hand. For this purpose a committee was to be formed in every country in order to form groups after the Nihilist pattern, and at the proper time to take the lead of the movement. The activity of all these national organisations was to be united in the Central Committee in London, which was an international body. The organ of the organisation was to be the *Freedom*. The following of this new movement grew rapidly in every country, and already in 1881 a great demonstration of Most's ideas took place at the memorable International Revolutionary Congress in London, the holding of which was mainly due to the initiative of Most and the well-known Nihilist, Hartmann.

Already, in April, 1881, a preliminary congress had been held in Paris, at which the procedure of the "parliamentary Socialists" had been rejected, since only a social revolution was regarded as a remedy; in the struggle against present-day society

all and any means were looked upon as right and justifiable; and in view of this the distribution of leaflets, the sending of emissaries, and the use of explosives were recommended. A German living in London had proposed an amendment involving the forcible removal of all potentates after the manner of the assassination of the Russian Czar, but this was rejected as "at present not yet suitable." The congress following this preliminary one took place in London on July 14 to 19, 1881, and was attended by about forty delegates, the representatives of several hundred groups.

"The revolutionaries of all countries are uniting into an 'International Social Revolutionary Working Men's Association' for the purpose of a social revolution. The headquarters of the Association is at London, and sub-committees are formed in Paris, Geneva, and New York. In every place where like-minded supporters exist, sections and an executive committee of three persons are to be formed. The committees of a country are to keep up with one another, and with the Central Committee, regular communication by means of continual reports and information, and have to collect money for the purchase of poison and weapons, as well as to find places suitable for laying mines, and so on. To attain the proposed end, the annihilation of all rulers, ministers of State, nobility, the clergy, the most prominent capitalists, and other exploiters, any means are permissible, and therefore great attention should be given specially to the study of chemistry and the preparation of explosives, as be-

ing the most important weapons. Together with the chief committee in London there will also be established an executive committee of international composition and an information bureau, whose duty is to carry out the decisions of the chief committee and to conduct correspondence."

This Congress and the decisions passed thereat had very far-reaching and fateful consequences for the development of the Anarchism of action. The executive committee set to work at once, and sought to carry out every point of the proposed programme, but especially to utilise for purposes of demonstration and for feverish agitation every revolutionary movement of whatever origin or tendency it might be, whether proceeding from Russian Nihilism or Irish Fenianism. How successful their activity was, was proved only too well by now unceasing outrages in every country.

The London Congress operated as a beacon of fire; scarcely had it uttered its terrible concluding words when it found in all parts of Europe an echo multiplied a thousand-fold. Anarchism, which was thought to be dead, celebrated a dread resurrection, and in places where it had never existed it suddenly raised its Gorgon head aloft. The reason is mainly to be found in the fact that all the numerous radical-social elements which had not agreed with the tactics of the Social Democrats in view of Government prosecutions, now adopted Most's programme without asking in the least what the Anarchist theory was or whether they believed in it. The two catchwords of the Anarchism of action, Communism and An-

archy, did not fail to have their usual effect upon the most radical and confused elements of discontent. Communism is, to speak plainly, only "the absolute average"; and as there are large numbers of men who fall even below the average both mentally, morally, and materially, Communism can have at any time nothing terrible in it for these people, and even represents to them a highly desirable Eldorado. Collectivism is the impractical invention of a man of genius, that may be compared to a mechanical invention that consists of so many screws, wheels, and springs that it never can be set going. But Communism seems an easy expedient for the average man; it can always reckon upon a public; certainly one is always to be found. By Anarchy, of course, the mob understands always only its own dictatorship, and this remedy, too, always has a great attraction for the uneducated masses. But as regards the tactics commended by the London Congress, it was completely adapted to the mental capacities of the representatives of "darkest Europe." The "new movement" could thus count upon success, especially as skilful agitators like Kropotkin, Most, Penkert, Gautier, and others devoted to it all their remarkable powers. This success was gained with surprising rapidity.

In Paris in 1880 Anarchism was almost extinguished; its organ, the *Révolution Sociale*, had to cease when Andrieux, the Prefect of Police, who had supplied it with money, left his appointment, and supplies were stopped. The party was disorganised both in Paris and the provinces, and the Jurassic

Federation was nearly extinct. Immediately after the London Congress, the "Revolutionary International League" was established, an active inter-communication was kept up with London, and an eager agitation was developed. In consequence, however, of the strong opposition of the other Socialists, this League remained weak, and scarcely numbered a hundred members. On the other hand, Anarchism increased all the more in the great industrial centres of the provinces. In the South were founded the *Fédération Lyonnaise* and the *Fédération Stéphanoise*, which, especially after Kropotkin took over the leadership and cleverly took advantage of the discords prevailing among other Socialists (*e. g.*, at the congress of St. Etienne), made astonishing progress in Lyons, the main centre of the movement, St. Etienne, Roanne, Narbonne, Nîmes, Bordeaux, and other places. According to Kropotkin, these unions already numbered in a year's time 8000 members. In Lyons they possessed an organ, which, like Most's *Freedom*, appeared under all kinds of titles in order to elude the police, and which openly advocated outrages and gave recipes for the manufacture of explosives.

The consequences of this unchecked agitation soon became visible. The first opportunity was given by the great strikes which broke out at the beginning of 1882 in Roanne, Bezières, Molières, and other industrial centres of Southern France, and were used by the Anarchists for their own purposes. A workman, Fournier, who shot his em-

ployer in the open street, was honoured in Lyons by the summoning of a meeting to present him with a presentation revolver. For the national fête on the 14th July, 1882, a larger riot was planned to take place in Paris, for which purpose help was also sought from London. But as there happened to be a review of troops in Paris on that date, the Anarchists contented themselves with issuing a manifesto "to the Slaves of Labour," concluding with the words: "No Fêtes! Death to the Exploiters of Labour! Long Live the Social Revolution!" In autumn, 1882, riots broke out in Montceau-les-Mines and Lyons, in which violent means were employed, including dynamite. Next spring (March, 1883), there and in Paris great demonstrations of the "unemployed" took place in the streets, combined with robbery and dynamite outrages, and on July 14th there were sanguinary encounters with the armed forces of the State in Roubaix and elsewhere, when the populace was incited to arise against the *bourgeoisie*, "who" (it was said) "were indulging in festivities while they had condemned Louise Michel, the champion of the proletariat, to a cruel imprisonment."

The French Government now thought it no longer possible to look on quietly at these proceedings, and sought to secure the agitators, which proved no light task. Of the fourteen prisoners accused of complicity in the riots of Montceau-les-Mines, only nine were condemned to terms of imprisonment of one to five years or less important counts. On the other hand, at the Lyons trial of 19th January, 1883,

only three out of sixty-six were acquitted ; the others, including Kropotkin, his follower Gautier, a brilliant orator and fanatical propagandist, Bordas, Bernard, and others, were condemned to imprisonment with the full penalty on the strength of the law of March 14, 1872, against the " International." Almost all the accused, including Kropotkin, openly confessed that both intellectually and in deed they were the originators of the excesses at Lyons and Montceau-les-Mines, and that they were Anarchists, but denied the existence of an international organisation, and protested against the application of the law of the 14th March, 1872.

Similarly the Government succeeded in securing the ringleaders of the demonstrations in Paris. At the same time the Government endeavoured to check the Anarchist agitation by administrative methods; but nothing could stay the progress of the new movement that had started since the London Congress. France is the headquarters of Anarchism, Paris contains its leading journals, over all France there exists a network of groups; the propaganda of action here celebrated its saddest triumphs, as is only too well shown by the cases of Ravachol, Henry, and Caserio.

Switzerland, the original home of the Anarchism of action, now gives rise to but little comment. Immediately after the London Congress Kropotkin developed his most active agitation in the old Anarchist centre, the Lake of Geneva district. On July 4, 1882, at Lausanne, at an annual congress of some thirty delegates, Kropotkin estimated the number of his adherents at two thousand. Lau-

sanne Congress adopted the same attitude as the London Congress, and took the opportunity on the occasion of the international musical festival at Geneva, August 12 to 14, 1882, to hold a secret international congress there. At this the question of the separation of the Anarchists from every other party was discussed. As a matter of fact this separation had long since taken place; the long-drawn struggle between Marxists and Bakuninists had caused a complete division between the Social Democrats and Anarchists; latterly even the adherents of Collectivism, the Possibilists, and other groups had separated from the Anarchists; and thus the Geneva Congress merely gave expression to the complete individualisation of the new movement, and it was decided to make the new programme officially known in a manifesto. This manifesto ran:

“ Our ruler is our enemy. We Anarchists, *i. e.*, men without any rulers, fight against all those who have usurped any power, or who wish to usurp it. Our enemy is the owner who keeps the land for himself, and makes the peasant work for his advantage. Our enemy is the manufacturer who fills his factory with wage-slaves; our enemy is the State, whether monarchical, oligarchical, or democratic, with its officials and staff of officers, magistrates, and police spies. Our enemy is every thought of authority, whether men call it God or devil, in whose name the priests have so long ruled honest people. Our enemy is the law which always oppresses the weak by the strong, to the justification and apotheosis of crime. But if the landowners,

the manufacturers, the heads of the State, the priests, and the law are our enemies, we are also theirs, and we boldly oppose them. We intend to reconquer the land and the factory from the land-owner and the manufacturer; we mean to annihilate the State, under whatever name it may be concealed; and we mean to get our freedom back again in spite of priest or law. According to our strength, we will work for the annihilation of all legal institutions, and are in accord with everyone who defies the law by a revolutionary act. We despise all legal means because they are the negation of our rights; we do not want so-called universal suffrage, since we cannot get away from our own personal sovereignty, and cannot make ourselves accomplices in the crimes committed by our so-called representatives. Between us Anarchists and all political parties, whether Conservatives or Moderates, whether they fight for freedom or recognise it by their admissions, a deep gulf is fixed. We wish to remain our own masters and he among us who strives to become a chief or leader is a traitor to our cause. Of course we know that individual freedom cannot exist without a union with other free associates. We all live by the support one of another, that is the social life which has created us, that is the work of all, which gives to each the consciousness of his rights and the power to defend them. Every social product is the work of the whole community, to which all have a claim in equal manner. For we are Communists; we recognise that unless patrimonial, communal, provincial,

and national limits are abolished, the work must be begun anew. It is ours to conquer and defend common property, and to overthrow governments by whatever name they may be called."

In spite of the severe repressive measures taken against the Swiss Anarchists in consequence of the outrages in the south of France, in which they were rightly supposed to be implicated, they held their annual congress from July 7 to 9, 1883, at Chaux-de-Fonds, at which the establishment of an international fund "for the sacrifice of the reactionary *bourgeoisie*," the disadvantage from the Anarchist standpoint of a union of revolutionary groups, and the necessity of the propaganda of action were decided upon.

The beginnings of German Anarchism in Switzerland date from the characteristic year 1880, when the division among German Socialists (arising from Most's influence) was felt among the Swiss working classes also. In the summer of 1880 Most himself was in Switzerland, and succeeded in collecting round him a small following, which, as early as October, felt itself strong enough to hold on the Lake of Geneva a sort of opposition congress to the one at Wyden, in order to declare its decisions null and void. At the same time the *Freedom* was recognised as the organ of the party. The London Congress gave a new impulse to the agitation. Proceedings were at once taken to realise in Switzerland the London programme; groups were formed, and connection made between them by special correspondents (*trimardeurs*), a propaganda fund estab-

lished, and messages sent to Germany inciting to commit outrages as opportunity offered. In consequence of this active agitation, the Anarchist groups in France and N. E. Switzerland continually increased, and when in 1883 Most's *Freedom* no longer could be published in London, it appeared in Switzerland under the editorship of Stellmacher, who was afterwards executed in Vienna, until Most, after performing his sentence of imprisonment in London, transferred it with him to New York. In this year (1883) the growth of Anarchism was so rapid that its adherents even succeeded in gaining the majority in many of the German working-men's clubs or in breaking them up. In August, 1883, the Anarchists held a secret conference in Zürich, which declared Most's system of groups to be satisfactory; drew up a new plan for extending, as far as possible and with all possible safety, the spread of Anarchist literature; and considered the establishment of a secret printing-press. The activity of the Swiss Anarchists consisted mainly in smuggling Anarchist literature into Germany and Austria, while the Jurassic Federation again concerned itself chiefly with doing the same for Southern France. Both parties now had the most friendly relations one with another.

Swiss Anarchism leads us directly to Germany and Austria. Germany may be termed the most free from Anarchists of any country in Europe. In the seventies a few groups had been founded here from Switzerland, and by means of the *Arbeiter-zeitung* (*Working-Mens' Journal*), appearing in Bern,

and conducted by Reinsdorf, a former compositor and enthusiastic agitator, an attempt was made to convert the working classes of Germany to Anarchism. But owing to the strength of Social Democracy in this country, all Reinsdorf's efforts at agitation were in vain. Even the superior skill of Johann Most could only produce very feeble and transitory results. When he openly professed Anarchism, and was expelled from the Social Democratic party, a small following remained to him in Germany; but in the German Empire only a dozen or so groups were formed (chiefly in Berlin and Hamburg) which adopted Most's programme; but their numbers did not rise above two hundred, and they remained quite unimportant.

The effects, however, of Most's agitation in Switzerland were all the more strongly felt in Austria, the classic land of political immaturity and insecurity. To-day the Austrian Empire is almost free from Anarchists; other elements have come to take up the *rôle* of fishing in troubled waters. But at the time of the general increase of Anarchism, after the London Congress, Austria-Hungary was one of the strongholds of Anarchism. A former house painter, Josef Penkert, a man who had given himself a very fair education by his own efforts, and was Most's most eager pupil, conducted the agitation in Vienna and Pesth. Groups sprang up, and the agitation was so strong that the new Social Democratic party was soon relegated to the background. Everywhere Anarchist papers arose—in Vienna the *Zukunft* (*Future*) and the *Delnicke Listy*, in Reichen-

berg the *Radical*, in Prague the *Socialist* and the *Communist*, in Lemberg the *Praca*, in Cracow the *Robotnik* and the *Przedswit*, imported from Switzerland. The chief organs of Austrian Anarchism, however, flourished on the other side of the river Leitha, where the press laws were interpreted more liberally than in the west of the kingdom. In Hungary there were numerous Anarchist journals, some of which, like the Pesth *Socialist*, preached the most sanguinary and merciless propaganda. This was acted upon in Vienna, under the guidance of Penkert, Stellmacher, and Kammerer, in such a way that Most's *Freedom*, which was smuggled in in large quantities, was delighted at it. In 1881 Anarchist meetings had collisions with the authorities. The money for the agitation was obtained by robbery, as the trial of Merstallinger proved. The most prominent Anarchist speakers were examined judicially in consequence of this trial, which took place in March, 1882, but had to be acquitted, which naturally only increased the confidence of the propagandists. The Socialists succeeded no better in making headway against this rapidly increasing movement. The "General Workmen's Conference," sitting at Brünn on the 15th and 16th of October, 1882, certainly passed an open vote of want of confidence against the Anarchist minority, but a resolution to the effect that Merstallinger's offence was a common crime, that the tactics preached by the Anarchists ought to be rejected as unworthy of Social Democrats, and that all adherents of such tactics were to be regarded as enemies and traitors

to the people—this was rejected after a hot debate. All this naturally increased the confidence and recklessness of the Anarchist agitation. Secret printing-presses were busily engaged spreading incendiary literature, which advocated the murder of police officials and explained the tactics suitable for this purpose. On the 26th and 27th October, 1883, at a secret conference at Lang Enzersdorf, a new plan of action was discussed and adopted, namely, to proceed with all means in their power to take action against "exploiters and agents of authority," to keep people in a state of continual excitement by such acts of terrorism, and to bring about the revolution in every possible way. This programme was immediately acted upon in the murder of several police agents. On December 15, 1883, at Floridsdorf, a police official named Hlubek was murdered, and the condemnation of Rouget, who was convicted of the crime, on June 23, 1884, was immediately answered the next day by the murder of the police agent Blöct. The Government now took energetic measures. By order of the Ministry, a state of siege was proclaimed in Vienna and district from January 30, 1884, by which the usual tribunals for certain crimes and offences were temporarily suspended, and the severest repressive measures were exercised against the Anarchists, so that Anarchism in Austria rapidly declined, and at the same time it soon lost its leaders. Stellmacher and Kammerer were executed, Penkert escaped to England, most of the other agitators were fast in prison, the journals were suppressed and the groups broken

up. The same occurred in Hungary, which had only followed the fashion in Austria, for in Hungary the social question is by no means so acute and the public movement in it is merely political.

At present Anarchism in Germany and Austria is confined to an (at most) harmless doctrinaireism, and it will be well to accept with great reserve any statements to the contrary; for neither those who were condemned at the last Anarchist trial at Vienna, nor the Bohemian Anarchist and Omladinist trials, nor the suspected persons who have recently migrated to Germany, appear to have been more than half conscious of Anarchism, nor do they appear to have had any international associations.

In Belgium, also, after the passing of the German Socialist laws, a difference of opinion became manifest among the working classes, which gave new life to Anarchism, almost extinct as it was at the end of the seventies. The "German Reading Union" in Brussels split into two parties, the more radical of which was filled with Most's ideas and eagerly agitated for the dissemination of his *Freedom*. As this radical tendency had found many supporters among the German Socialists, it made itself noticeable at the Brussels Congress of 1880. The keener became the struggle between the Most-Hasselman and the Bebel-Liebknecht parties, the more sharply defined became the opposition in the ranks of the Belgian working classes. The Radicals united into a "Union Révolutionnaire"; founded their own party organ, *La Persévérance*, at Verviers; and declared themselves in favour of the London Congress as

against that at Coire. The others held quarterly advisory congresses at Brussels, Verviers, and Ceresmes, at which it was agreed to revive the "International Working-Men's Association" on a revolutionary basis and not to limit the various groups in their autonomy. These meetings also adopted the resolution which the German members in Brussels had suggested about the employment of explosives. But in spite of the active agitation, and the founding of the "Republican League" to show the activity of the Anarchists as opposed to the Socialist "Electoral Reform League," Anarchism in Belgium made no progress, mainly on account of internal dissension, and the annual congress arranged for 1882 did not even take place. In spite of the most active propaganda, circumstances have not altered in Belgium during the last ten years. We must be careful not to set down to the Anarchists the repeated dynamite outrages which are so common during the great strikes in Belgium, although in certain isolated cases, as in the dynamite affair at Gomshoren, near Brussels, in 1883, the hand of the Anarchists cannot be mistaken.

England, the ancient refuge of political offenders, although it has sheltered Bakunin, Kropotkin, Reclus, Most, Penkert, Louise Michel, Cafiero, Malatesta, and other Anarchist leaders, and still shelters some of them; although London is rich in Anarchist clubs and newspapers, meetings and congresses, yet possesses no Anarchism "native to the soil," and has formed at all times rather a kind of exchange or market-place for Anarchist ideas, mo-

tive forces, and the literature of agitation. London is especially the headquarters of German Anarchism; the English working classes have, however, always regarded their ideas very coldly, while the Government have always regarded the eccentric proceedings of the Anarchists, as long as they confined themselves merely to talking and writing, in the most logical spirit of the doctrine of *laissez faire*. Certainly, when Most went a little too far in his *Freedom*, the full power of the English law was put in motion against him, and condemned him on one occasion to sixteen, and on another to eighteen months' imprisonment with hard labour. But of greater effect than this punishment was the fact that in all London no printer could be found to set up the type for *Freedom*. Thereupon Most left thankless Old England grumbling, and went to the New World, where, however, he was, if possible, taken even less seriously.

Spain was the only country where Anarchism, even under the new impulse of the London Congress, really kept in the main to its old Collectivist principles. In consequence of the movement proceeding from the London Congress, the Spanish Anarchists called a national congress at Barcelona on September 24 and 25, 1881, at which, in the presence of one hundred and forty delegates, a programme and statutes of organisation were drawn up and a "Spanish Federation of the International Working-Men's Association" was founded. Its aim was to be the political, economic, and social emancipation of all the working classes by the

establishment of a form of society founded upon a Collectivist basis, and guaranteeing the unconditional autonomy of the free and federally united communes. The only means of reaching this aim was declared to be a revolutionary upheaval carried out by force. The organisation sketched out at the Barcelona Congress is quite in Proudhon's spirit; the arrangement of its members was to be a double one, both by trades and districts, and both divisions had mutually to enlarge each other. The basis of the trade organisation was to be formed by the single local groups; these were to be united into local associations, these into provincial associations, and these again into a national association, the "Union." Monthly, quarterly, and yearly conferences, and the committees attached to them, were to form the decisive and executive organs of these associations. Parallel with the arrangement by trades was to be the territorial arrangement, all the local trade associations of the same district being formed into one united local association, this again into provincial associations, these into the national association of the whole country, *i. e.*, into the "Federation"; and here again local, provincial, and national congresses performed all executive functions as local, provincial, and national committees. The National Committee established by the Congress developed immediately an active agitation, so that at the next congress at Seville (24th to 26th September, 1883), attended by 254 delegates, the Federation numbered already 10 provincial, 200 local unions, and 632 sections, with 50,000 members.

Their organ, the *Revista Social*, which appeared in Madrid, possessed about 10,000 subscribers, although besides this there were several local journals.

But this rapid growth of the Anarchist movement in Spain was followed by a retrogression, mainly caused by the increased severity of the measures taken by the Government in consequence of the terrorism created by the Andalusian secret society of "The Black Hand" (*Mano Negra*), and proceedings were taken against the Anarchists. Their examination, however, failed to reveal the supposed connection between the *Mano Negra* and Anarchism, and the Anarchists, who had been arrested wholesale, had to be acquitted. The Federation itself had expressed to every society its disapproval of the "secret actions of those assassins," and had pointed to the legality and public nature of their organisation and agitation, as well as to their statutes, which had received the approval of the authorities. The congress at Valencia (1883) repeated this declaration. Henceforth Spanish Anarchism proceeded on peaceful lines, and only in the last few years did it have recourse to force after the example of the French, as, *e. g.*, in the attack on Campos, and the outrage in the Liceo Theatre at Barcelona.

As to Italy, here also after 1880 Anarchism awoke to new life, as it did everywhere else, and at the same time broke finally with the Democratic Socialists. In December, 1886, the Anarchists held a secret congress at Chiasso, at which fifteen delegates of cities of North Italy took part. These professed Anarchist Communism, viewed with horror any di-

vision *au choix*, and recommended "the use of every favorable opportunity for seriously disturbing public order." In agreement with this the Italians, represented by Cafiero and Malatesta, took part in the London Congress in the following year. On their return these two men developed an active agitation, and began a bitter campaign against the moderate Socialists, especially when their leader Costa was elected to Parliament, which the Anarchists regarded as a betrayal of the proletariat to the *bourgeoisie*. In the year 1883 Malatesta was arrested at Florence, and, with several companions, condemned by the royal courts, on February 1, 1884, to several years' imprisonment, it being proved that groups had already been formed in Rome, Florence, and Naples on the basis of the London programme, and that these groups had planned and prepared dynamite outrages. Leghorn, which in the time of the Romans was a refuge for criminals, may be regarded as the centre of modern Italian Anarchism. "In Leghorn," writes one who knows his facts, "the number of the Anarchists of action is legion. The idea of slaking their inborn thirst for blood on the 'fat *bourgeoisie*' could not fail to gain many adherents among the descendants of that Sciolla, who at the time of the last Grand Duke founded the celebrated dagger-band and slew 700 people; how many adherents it gained may be seen from the figures of the last election (March, 1894), when 3200 electors voted for the Anarchist murderer Merga." Lugo (the home of Lega), Forli, and Cesena form important centres of Italian Anarchism. The rôle

which it has played in the international propaganda is fresh in the memory of all, and is sufficiently indicated by the names of Lega and Caserio.

It will be seen from the foregoing that Anarchism, after retrograding till the end of the seventies, made unexpectedly rapid progress in every country after 1880, lasting till about 1884, but after that a new reaction, or at least a diminution of propaganda, is to be noticed. The renewed force with which the Anarchism of action has during the last three years or so made itself felt in the Latin countries, appears already to present new features; this may be termed the third epoch of Anarchism. The epoch dating from the London Congress is characterised by certain party features (federations, alliances, etc.), which have now quite disappeared.

With Most's departure for America, the central government created by him—if we can speak of a central government in view of the complete autonomy of the groups—appears to have completely lost its power, and when, at the congresses of Chicago (1891) and London (1892), Merlino and Malatesta moved that some form of leadership of the party should be established, their motion was rejected, it being pointed out that it was inconsistent with the main Anarchist principle: "Do as thou wilt." When nowadays we hear talk of an "International Organisation" of an Anarchist party and so forth, this must be taken merely in the very wide meaning of a completely free *entente* between single groups.

Everything at present rests with the "group," which is, at the same time, very small and of an extremely fluctuating character. Five, seven, or at most a dozen men unite in a group according to occupation, personal relationships, propinquity of dwelling, or other causes; only after a certain time to separate again. The groups are only connected with each other almost entirely by means of moving intermediaries, called *trimardeurs*, a slang expression borrowed from the thieves. This organisation completely corresponds to the purely individual character of their actions; Anarchist riots and conspiracies are out of fashion; and the outrages of recent years have arisen almost exclusively from the initiative of individuals. This circumstance, as well as the whole organisation of the Anarchists, of course renders difficult any summary proceedings on the part of the Government of the country; which is probably by no means the least important reason for the adoption of these tactics by the Anarchists.

As to the numerical strength of Anarchism, different estimates are given by the Anarchists and their opponents; but all of them are very untrustworthy. Kropotkin, in 1882, gave the numbers of those living at Lyons at 3000; those in the basin of the Rhone at 5000; and spoke of thousands of others living in the south of France. One of the sixty-six defendants at the Lyons trial wrote: "We are *all* captured"—a remarkable difference of numbers compared with Kropotkin's 3000. Lately, the Paris *Figaro* has published some data, said to be from an

authentic source, about the strength of the Anarchists, and, according to this journal, about 2000 Anarchists are known to the police in France, among whom are about 500 Frenchmen and 1500 foreigners. The majority of these foreign Anarchists consists of the Italians (45 per cent.), then come the Swiss (25 per cent.), the Germans and Russians (20 per cent., each), Belgians and Austrians (5 per cent., each), Spaniards and Bulgarians (each 2 per cent.), and the natives of several minor States. This proportionate percentage of course only refers to Anarchists living in France or known there, and cannot be taken as trustworthy for international numbers. We have in fact practically no knowledge of its present strength, for it is as often undervalued as overrated. When this is done by those who are not Anarchists, it cannot be wondered at, since one of the leaders of the Anarchism of action in Paris confessed his own ignorance by the remark: "There are in the world some thousands of us, perhaps some millions."





CHAPTER IX

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Legislation against Anarchists—Anarchism and Crime—Tolerance towards Anarchist Theory—Suppression of Anarchist Crime—Conclusion.



WHEN about a year ago (1894) the Italian Caserio, a baker's apprentice, assassinated the amiable and respected President of the French Republic, probably thinking that he was thereby ridding the world of a tyrant, the public, in a mood perfectly comprehensible if not justifiable, was ready to take the severest measures against anyone suspected of Anarchism. An international convention against the Anarchists was demanded, but this was almost unanimously rejected by European diplomatists. Parliaments, however, showed themselves more subservient to the anxiety of the public than the diplomatists. Italy gave its Government full powers over administrative dealings with all suspected persons, and France passed a Press law limiting very considerably, not only the Anarchist press, but the press generally. Spain had already

anticipated this action. Germany took all manner of trouble to frame exceptional laws, although one cannot quite see how this country was concerned in the matter. England alone, true to its traditions, rejected the proposal of the House of Lords to pass exceptional laws against the Anarchists, Lord Rosebery, who was then Premier, declaring that the ordinary law and the existing executive organisation were amply sufficient to cope with the Anarchists.

The question as to which State has pursued the better policy appears at first extremely difficult to answer. It is believed that we have in Anarchism something quite new, which has never occurred before, something monstrous and not human, against which quite extraordinary measures are permissible. To judge whether this standpoint is correct, we must, before everything, distinguish carefully the theory from the propaganda.

The common view—or prejudice—soon disposes of the Anarchist theory: the anxious possessor of goods thinks it is nothing less than a direct incitement to robbery and murder; the practical politician merely regards the Anarchist theory as not worth debate, because it could not be carried out in practice; and even men of science, as we have seen in the case of Laveleye, and could prove by other examples, look upon Anarchist theories merely as the mad and feverish fancies of extravagant minds.

None of them would much mind if all Anarchist literature were consumed in an *auto da fé* and the authors thereof rendered harmless by being sent off

to Siberia or New Caledonia. Such judgments are easily passed, but whether one could settle the question permanently thereby is another matter.

That the theory of Anarchism is not merely a systematic incitement to robbery and murder we need hardly repeat, now that we have concluded an exhaustive statement of it. Proudhon and Stirner, the men who have laid down the basis of the new doctrine, never once preached force. "If ideas once have originated," said Proudhon once, "the very paving-stones would rise of themselves, unless the Government has sense enough to avert this. And if such is not the case, then nothing is of any use." It will be admitted that, for a revolutionary, this is a very moderate speech. The doctrine of propaganda, which since Proudhon's time has always accompanied a certain form of Anarchist theory, is a foreign element, having no necessary or internal connection with the fundamental ideas of Anarchism. It is simply a piece of tactics borrowed from the circumstances peculiar to Russia, and accepted moreover only by one fraction of the Anarchists, and approved by very few indeed in its most crude form; it is merely the old tactics of all revolutionary parties in every age. The deeds of people like Jacques Clement, Ravayrac, Corday, Sand, and Caserio, are all of the same kind; hardly anyone will be found to-day to maintain that Sand's action followed from the views of the *Burschenschaft*, or Clement's from Catholicism, even when we learn that Sand was regarded by his fellows as a saint, as was Charlotte Corday and Clement, or even when learned Jesuits like Sa,

Mariana, and others, *cum licentia et approbatione superiorum*, in connection with Clement's outrage, discussed the question of regicide in a manner not unworthy of Netschajew or Most.

We may quote the remarks of a specialist¹ upon the connection between politics and criminality. "History is rich in examples of the combination of criminal acts with politics, wherein sometimes political passion and sometimes a criminal disposition forms the chief element. While Pompeius the Sober has all honest people on his side, his talented contemporaries, Cicero, Cæsar, and Brutus have as followers all the baser sort, men like Clodius and Cataline,² libertines and drunkards like Antonius, the bankrupt Curio, the mad Clelius, Dolabella the spendthrift, who wanted to repudiate all his debts by passing a law. The Greek Clephts, those brave champions of the independence of their home, were, in times of peace, brigands. In Italy the Papacy and the Bourbons in 1860 kept the brigands in their pay against the national party and its troops; and Garibaldi had on his side in Sicily the Maffia, just as in Naples the Liberals were supported by the Camorra. This alliance with the Camorra is not even yet quite dissolved, as the occurrences in Naples at the time of the recent disturbances in the Italian Parliament have shown, nor will matters probably improve. Criminals usually take a large share in the initial stages of insurrections and revo-

¹ Lombroso, *Die Anarchisten*, p. 33. Hamburg, 1896.

² Cataline as a follower of Cicero is a new version of the supposed facts.—TRANS.

lutions, for at a time when the weak and undecided are still hesitating, the impulsive force of abnormal and unhealthy natures preponderates, and their example calls forth epidemics of excesses.

“Chenn, in his remarks upon revolutionary movements in France before 1848, has shown that political passion gradually degenerated into unconcealed criminal attempts; thus the precursors of Anarchism at that time had for leader a certain Coffrean, who finally became a raving Communist, and exalted thieving into a socio-political principle, plundered the merchants with the aid of his adherents, because in his opinion they cheated their customers; by thus doing they believed they were only making perfectly justifiable reprisals, and at the same time converting the plundered ones into discontented men who would join the revolutionary cause. This group also occupied themselves in the manufacture of forged bank notes, which led in 1847 to their being discovered and severely punished after the real Republicans had disowned them. In England at the time of the conspiracies against Cromwell, bands of robbers collected in the neighbourhood of London, and the number of thieves increased; the robber-bands assumed a political colouring and asked those whom they attacked whether they had sworn an oath of fidelity to the Republic, and according to their answer they let them go or robbed and ill-treated them. Companies of soldiers had to be sent to repress them, nor were the soldiers always victorious. Hordes of vagabonds, bands of robbers, and societies of thieves in unheard-of numbers also ap-

peared as forerunners of the French Revolution. Mercier states that in 1789 an army of 10,000 vagabonds gradually approached Paris and penetrated into the city; these were the rabble that attended the wholesale executions during the Reign of Terror and later took part in the fusilades at Toulon and the wholesale drownings at Nantes; at the same time the revolutionary troops and militia were, according to Meissner, merely organised bands who committed every kind of murder, robbery, and extortion. The criminals who happened to be caught occasionally during the Revolution sought to save themselves by the cry of *à l'aristocrate*; when on trial they behaved in the most audacious manner, and grinned at the judges when condemned, and the women behaved most shamelessly. In 1790 only 490 accused, and in 1791 not more than 1198, were sent to the Conciergerie. A similar state of affairs prevailed in the Commune of 1871. Among the population then in Paris, deceived as they were in their patriotic hopes, unnerved by inglorious combats, weakened by hunger and alcohol, no one cared to bestir themselves but the unruly elements, the *déclassés*, the criminals, the madmen, and the drunkards who imposed their will upon the city; that these were the main elements in the rising is shown by the slaughter of helpless captives, by the refined cruelty of the murderers, who compelled their victims to jump over a wall, and shot them while doing so, while others were riddled by bullets; thus one citizen received sixty-nine bullets, and Abbé Bengy had sixty-two bayonet wounds."

The foregoing examples could easily be increased in order to show that the criminal tactics of the Anarchists are nothing new. If they are more formidable and more monstrous than those of the religious dissenters of the Renaissance or the political criminals of the Revolutionary period, the reason lies in the age in which we live. We mean that those who use the progress of modern mechanics, chemistry, technical science, and so on, solely in order to increase the terror inspired by organised murder, and to make the furies of war invincible, ought not to be so surprised if the revolutionaries in their turn no longer content themselves with old-fashioned weapons, but seek to utilise also the achievements of modern chemistry. *Exempla trahunt.* The Anarchist propaganda should not be judged so severely; new and wonderful as it appears to the majority, it is by no means so in reality; it is the stock piece of all revolutionaries, somewhat modernised and adapted to a new age and a new doctrine.

Certainly the Anarchist doctrine is something new, if you will; but we consider this means little if it merely expresses the fact that these new demands exceed all previous changes in society. This is too trivial to justify the application of exceptional measures and the suspension of the principle of tolerance to all opinions. The Anarchists are not, after all, so very original; they are a modernised version of the Chiliasts of more than a thousand years ago, and differ from them only as the mental conception of the present differs from that of Irenæus. For he sought to justify his dreams by an

appeal to religion, while the Anarchists appeal to modern science. That is all. But if we blame for its intolerance, and stigmatise as belonging to the "dark ages," the age that persecuted the Chiliasts with fire and sword, we certainly ought not to show a still greater intolerance to the Chiliasts of our own day.

But it may be said that this fantasy, this Anarchist theory, is far more dangerous than all the other errors that have preceded it; it wishes to abolish property, reduce the family to Hetairism, and so forth. We hope we have shown clearly in the preceding pages that, at bottom, all Anarchist theories, even Kropotkin's, are very harmless, and would merely result in leaving everything as before, merely changing the present compulsory system into a voluntary one. A large group of Anarchists, indeed the most extreme, are pure Individualists, even maintaining individual property; how this could be maintained without some legal guarantee is a question for themselves; but it is evident that the Anarchist theory would alter the existing state of things much less than the social-democratic theory; for the latter demands the cessation of Individualist economy, and would punish any opposition to its views as a crime, just as we punish theft to-day. It is the same with marriage. Anarchists of all parties merely wish the family to be changed into the "family group"; but that means that everything could practically remain unchanged; only the legal guarantees and privileges associated with marriage must be abolished. We will neither discuss the morality,

or lack of it, nor the practicability or impracticability of this idea; but in this the Anarchists go no further than what Fichte, or that moderate liberal, Wilhelm von Humboldt, or even F. A. Schlegel, the poet of Lucinde, have demanded as regards natural marriage; and Schlegel certainly is somewhat of the national-Christian-Socialism type. In any case, here, too, Socialism with its more drastic measures is more formidable, for even if it would respect the sexual group—which may be doubted in view of the artificial organisation of work in the social State—yet the character of the “family” would quite disappear owing to the Socialists’ violent interference with the care and bringing up of children. It is certainly characteristic in this respect that the authoritative Socialists regard even Anarchism as merely a modern form of the Manchester Liberal School, sneering at Anarchists as “small *bourgeoisie*,” and representing them as quite harmless against the reforms planned by themselves.

But whether it is more or less dangerous need not be considered, when it is a question of whether an opinion is worth discussion. If an opinion contains elements which are useful, serviceable, or necessary for the majority of the members of society, these opinions will be realised in practice without regard to whether danger thereby threatens or does not threaten single forms or arrangements of present society. Exceptional legislation may check criticism of unhealthy or obsolete forms of society, but cannot hinder the organic development of society itself; for society will then only develop through a

series of painful catastrophes instead of by a gradual evolution; catastrophes which are the consequence of opinions which have not had free discussion. It would be more than sad if we had to demonstrate the truth of these views again to-day, although our own age, or at least, we Continentals, seem in our condemnation of Anarchism to have lost all calmness, and to have abandoned those principles of toleration and Liberalism of which we are generally so proud. It has been rightly said that the freedom of conscience must include not only the freedom of belief, but also the freedom of unbelief. In that case the right of freedom of opinions must not be confined merely to the forms of the State: one should be equally free to deny the State itself. Without this extension of the principle, freedom of thought is a mockery.

We therefore demand for the Anarchist doctrine, as long as it does not incite to crime, the right of free discussion and the tolerance due to every opinion, quite without regard to whether it is more dangerous, or more probable, or more practicable than any other opinion; and this we do not merely from *a priori* and academic reasons, but in the best interests of the community.

We consider the Anarchist idea unrealisable, just as is any other scheme based only on speculation; we think Proudhon's picture of society quite as Utopian as Plato's, and certainly none the less a product of genius. Moreover, we are convinced that grave complications have already arisen in society owing to the fanatical pursuit of these Utopian ideas, and

still greater ones will arise; and yet we do not belong to those who deplore the appearance of these ideas, or who believe that serious and permanent danger is threatened to the development of society by the Anarchist idea. This, indeed, would be the place in which to write a chapter on the value of the error; but we must leave this to writers on ethics, and content ourselves with pointing out that the development of culture does not depend mainly upon the truth or falsehood of ruling ideas. As we have often said in these pages in our criticism of the Anarchists, life is not merely the fulfilment of philosophic dreams or the embodiment of absolute truths; on the contrary, it can easily be proved from history that error and superstition have rather been the most potent factors in human development. When discussing Stirner's views, we have shewn the cardinal error that lies in the conclusion that only the absolutely true is useful and admissible in practice. Certainly, philosophy has taught us the insufficiency of all *a priori* proofs of the truth of the conception of God; critical science has shown us its empirical origin, and taught us that our ideas of the soul, God, and the future life have proceeded from the most erroneous and crudest attempts to explain certain physiological and psychological phenomena: but even if the conception of the Deity were the greatest error committed by mankind, it is yet incontestable that this conception has produced and still produces the greatest blessings for mankind. We have taken up this standpoint against the Anarchists, and now it may turn out in their favour;

for, if it is not a question of doing away with the State altogether, merely because (as Stirner discovered, though he was not the first to do so) it is not sacred, nor absolute, nor real in the philosophic sense, so one need not consider an idea absolutely worthless, and therefore unworthy of discussion merely because it arises from and leads to errors.

Anarchism is certainly one of the greatest errors ever imagined by man, for it proceeds from assumptions and leads to conclusions which entirely contradict human nature and the facts of life.

Nevertheless, it also has its purpose in social evolution, and that not a small one, however frightened at this certain timid spirits may be. What is this mission? In so small a space as is now left us, it is hard to answer this without causing misunderstandings to arise on every side. But after what has been said, it will readily be perceived that Anarchism will be a factor in overcoming Socialism, if not by Anarchy yet at least by freedom.

A military trait runs through the whole world; the great wars and conquests of the last few decades and present international relations which compel most European states to keep their weapons always ready; all this has called forth a military strain of character, a necessity for defence based upon guardianship and compulsory organisation, which is increased by a similar need for defence in the province of economics, as a consequence of previous economic and social phenomena. This feature is seen in the universal endeavour to increase the power of the State at the expense of the individual, and to solve

economic problems in the same way as one organises an army. State Socialism, the Socialism of the chair, and the Christian Social movement prove the simultaneity of this characteristic of the age in every circle of modern society ; the Social Democratic party merely represents the group to whose impulse we must ascribe the fact of governments including Socialism in their programme, of professors inoculating young intelligences therewith from their chairs, of Rome eagerly seizing it as a welcome instrument wherewith to revive her faded popularity ; and the fact of politicians, who still call themselves liberal, giving up, often without a struggle, one position after the other in the defence of economic freedom.

We will not go so far as to brand every concession to the Socialist spirit of our time as blamable and harmful. After almost a century of continually increasing economic freedom, after the old form of society, with its ranks and institutions, has been completely broken up by Liberalism, an increase of social discipline, a rallying of mankind round new social standpoints, is perfectly natural. But it is just as natural that evolution will not be able to proceed in the one-sided direction begun by Socialism. Already the most unpleasant phenomena are visible. The power of the State profits most of all by the Socialist movement, which it combats as Social Democracy ; the rights of the individual retire to the background ; in the " industrial army," as in the military force, the individual is only a number, a unit ; the sense of freedom has almost

disappeared from our age. Freedom in its significance as to culture and civilisation is now completely misunderstood and underrated, and even considered an idle dream. But the gloomiest feature of Socialism is a renaissance of the *religiose* spirit and all the disadvantages it entails. The *religiose* attitude, as I have shown elsewhere,¹ is connected with an inclination for tutelage, and places the individual in quite a secondary position. In an age when the weak are only too surely convinced of the impossibility of maintaining themselves in the midst of the social whirlwind, when everyone seeks to join some community or society, it is easy to make religious proselytes. People mostly console a nation that has a low position in the economic scale with religion, as we console the sick. To those who suffer so bitterly from the inequality of power and wealth in our social system, there is shown a prospect of a future eternal recompense; and those who are continually seeking the support of some power higher than themselves are referred to the Highest Power of all. That always convinces them. The Socialist and the religious view of the world are one and the same; the former is the religion of the absolute, infallible, all-mighty, and ever-present State. The reawakening of the religious spirit simultaneously with the growth of Socialist parties is no mere chance. Socialism has slipped on the cowl and cassock with the greatest ease, and we have every reason to believe that this sad companionship is by no means

¹ *Mysticismus, Pietismus, Anti-Semitismus, am Ende des XIXten Jahrhunderts*, p. 5, foll. Wien, 1894.

ended ; the regard for personal freedom will decrease more and more ; the tendency towards authority and religion will increase ; the comprehension of purely mental effort will continue to disappear in proportion as society endeavours to transform itself into an industrial barrack. Whether the end of it all will be the Social Democratic popular State, or the Socialist Absolute Monarchy, matters but little. In any case, before things reach this point, a counter-acting tendency will make itself felt from the needs of the people, which will endeavour to force evolution back into the opposite path. The old implacable struggle between the Gironde and the Mountain will again be renewed ; and the impulse in this contest of the future will come from Anarchism, which is already preparing and sharpening the weapons for it. That Socialism will be overthrown by the introduction of Anarchism we do not believe ; but the conquest will be won under the banner of individual freedom. The centralising tendency and the coercive character of the system of doing everything in common, without which Socialism cannot have the least success, will naturally and necessarily be replaced by Federalism and free association. In these two distinctive features of a future reaction against a Socialism that would turn everything into one vast army, we recognise those two demands of theoretical Anarchism which are capable of realisation, and capable of it because they are not dogmas, like absolute freedom, but only methods.

Thus it appears not a *priori* but a *posteriori*, that the Anarchist theory must not be considered as ab-

solutely worthless because in itself it is an error and in its main demand is impracticable. Our opinion is that it contains at least as many useful elements as Socialism; and if to-day governments, men of learning, and even bishops proceed without alarm upon the path of Socialism, then a discussion of Anarchist theory should not be so coolly waved aside.

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But it is entirely different as regards the criminal propaganda of action. If Anarchists wish to spread their opinions abroad, there are quite sufficient means for doing so in civilised society. No one can be allowed the right of giving a sanguinary advertisement to his views by the murder of innocent visitors to a café or a theatre; still less have Anarchists the right, when they appeal to force, to complain if force is used against them.

It is perfectly fair that the State should proceed against criminal propaganda by legal measures, and that Anarchist criminals should suffer for their action, the punishment which a country inflicts even if it be the death penalty. There is no difference of opinion¹ as regards this view except among Anarchists themselves, who arrogate to themselves the right to kill, but deny it to the State. There remain only two points that we might add.

¹ The opinion which would relegate Anarchist criminals to the madhouse instead of to the guillotine deserves mention. In this connection, in spite of Neo-Buddhist peculiarities, the little work *Anarchismus und Seine Heilung*, by Emanuel (Leipsic, 1894), gives fresh points of view.

First of all, exceptional legislation should be avoided. It is in no way justified. Just as the motive of Anarchism to any offence affords no extenuating circumstances, so, too, it should not make matters worse. Secondly, we should not indulge in the vain hope that Anarchism itself, or the criminal results of it, can be combated by mere condemnation of Anarchist criminals, however just or unjust the sentence may be. Punishment appears to fanatics who long for the martyr's crown, no longer a deterrent but an atonement. In France in less than two years, Ravachol, Henry, and Vaillant were guillotined; but that did not deter Caserio in the least from his mad act.

Numerous Anarchist crimes are to be regarded merely as means to indirect suicide, a method by which those who commit them may end lives that are a burden to them, while they lack the courage to commit suicide directly. Lombroso, Krafft, Ebbing, and others cite a long list of political criminals who must certainly be regarded as such indirect suicides.

We will not enter the controversial province of criminal pathology, although it seems certain that in the criminal deeds of the Anarchism of action a large share is taken by persons pathologically diseased or mentally affected. For these also punishment loses its deterrent effect. Taken all in all, one cannot expect any other result from the punishment of Anarchist criminals, except the moral one of having defended the rights of society. On the other hand, the Anarchists regard the justifi-

cation of one of their own party as the strongest means of propaganda, and it cannot be denied that the Ravachol cult resulting from the execution of that common criminal, Ravachol, caused a considerable accession of strength to Communist Anarchism. The State cannot, of course, allow itself to look on at Anarchist crimes and "to shorten its arm"; but it must not delude itself that it will remove such crime or stop the Anarchist movement by means of the guillotine.

Does this mean that society is helpless in face of Anarchism? It is, if it possesses only force to suppress and not the power to convince; if society is only held together by compulsion, as the present State partly is, and the Socialist State would be still more, and threatens to fall to pieces if the apparatus of compulsion were given up; if the State, instead of trying to redress the unfortunately unalterable natural inequality of its members, only intensifies them by legalising all kinds of new inequalities, and if it regards its institutions, and especially the law, as instruments for the unalterable conservation of all present forms of society with all their imperfections and injustices. If right is done, and right is uttered arbitrarily, in a partisan and protectionist method; if equality before the law is disregarded by those who are called to defend the law; if belief in the reliability of the indispensable institutions of authority is lightly shaken by these very institutions themselves, then it is no wonder if men despair of the capability of the State to practice or to maintain right; and if the masses, always ready to generalise,

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deny right, law, State, and authority together. We have already pointed out repeatedly that Anarchism cannot be explained by pauperism alone. Pauperism justifies Socialism; but this movement against authority, which certainly does not bear in all cases the name of Anarchism, but which is to-day more widely spread than is often imagined, can only be explained by a confused mass of injustice and wrongdoing, of which the *bourgeois* State is daily and hourly guilty towards the weak.

The average man does not much mind his rich fellow-man riding in his carriage while he himself cannot even pay his tram fare; but that he should be abandoned by society to every chance official of justice, as a prey that has no rights, while justice often falters anxiously before those who are shielded by coats of arms and titles,—that makes his blood boil, and causes him to seek the origin of this injustice in the institution itself instead of in the way it works. How many Anarchists have become so merely because they were treated as common criminals when they happened to have the misfortune to be suspected of Anarchism? How many became Anarchists because they were outlawed by society on account of free and liberal views?

Anarchism may be defined etiologically as disbelief in the suitability of constituted society. With such views there would be only one way in which we could cut the ground from under the Anarchists' feet. Society must anxiously watch that no one should have reason to doubt its intention of letting

justice have free sway, but must raise up the despairing, and by all means in its power lead them back to their lost faith in society. A movement like Anarchism cannot be conquered by force and injustice, but only by justice and freedom.

THE END.

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